FREE stickers for you!

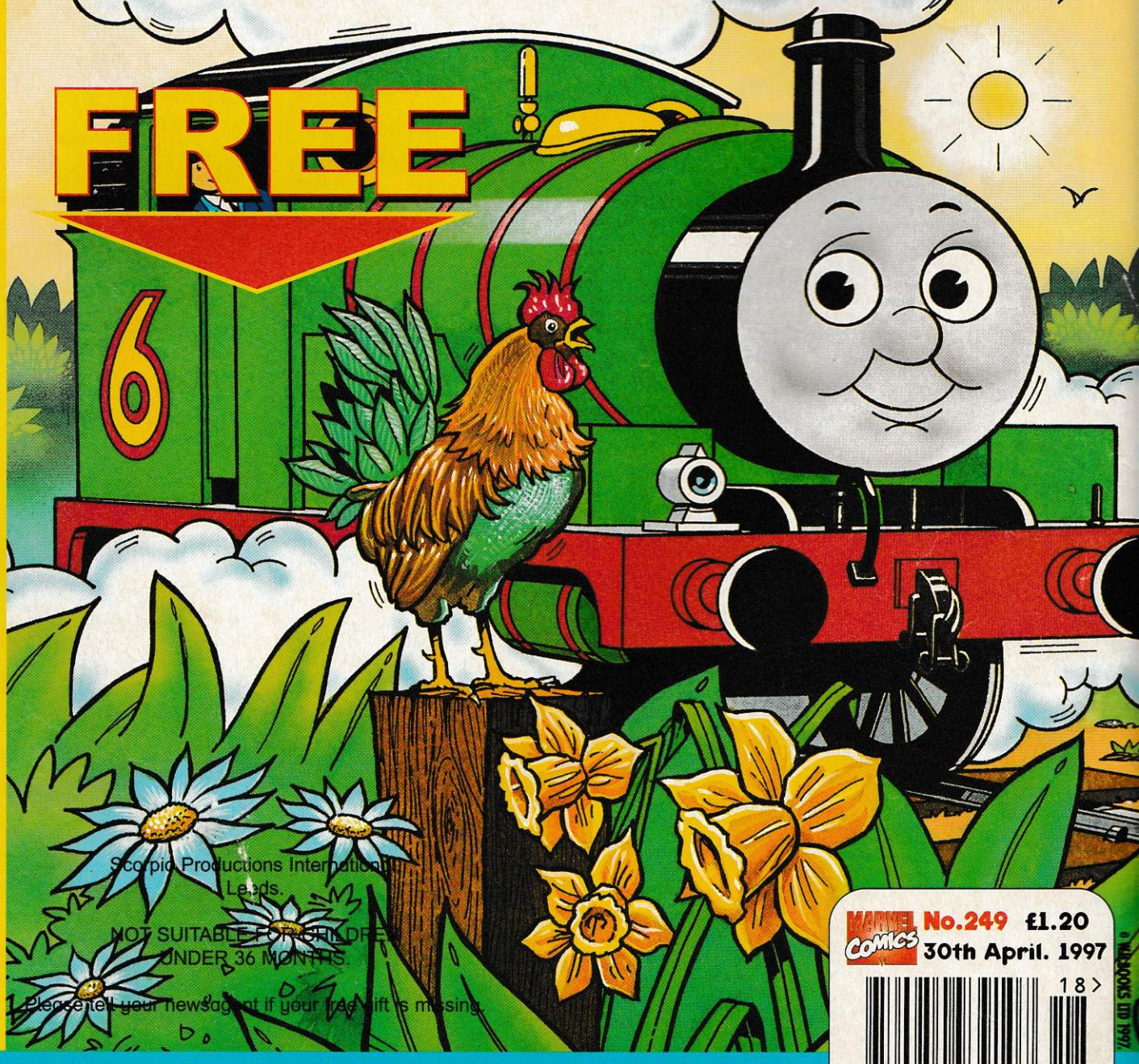
THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.

PEEP PEEP! FROM THOMAS!

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

FREE



Scorpio Productions International
Leeds.

NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 36 MONTHS.

If Please tell your newsagent if your free gift is missing.

MARVEL COMICS No.249 £1.20
30th April. 1997

© WILBOOKS LTD 1997.

Stories · Puzzles · Colouring

Hello, everybody!

In this issue....

3 Hen Havoc!

8 Jigsaw jumble!

10 Thomas Keeps Time!

12 Gordon Slows Down!

16 All about Rusty!

18 Helping James!

21 Join the dots!

22 Subscriptions!

23 Competition!

24 Something Fishy!

30 Mail train!

32 Photo Album!

Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to

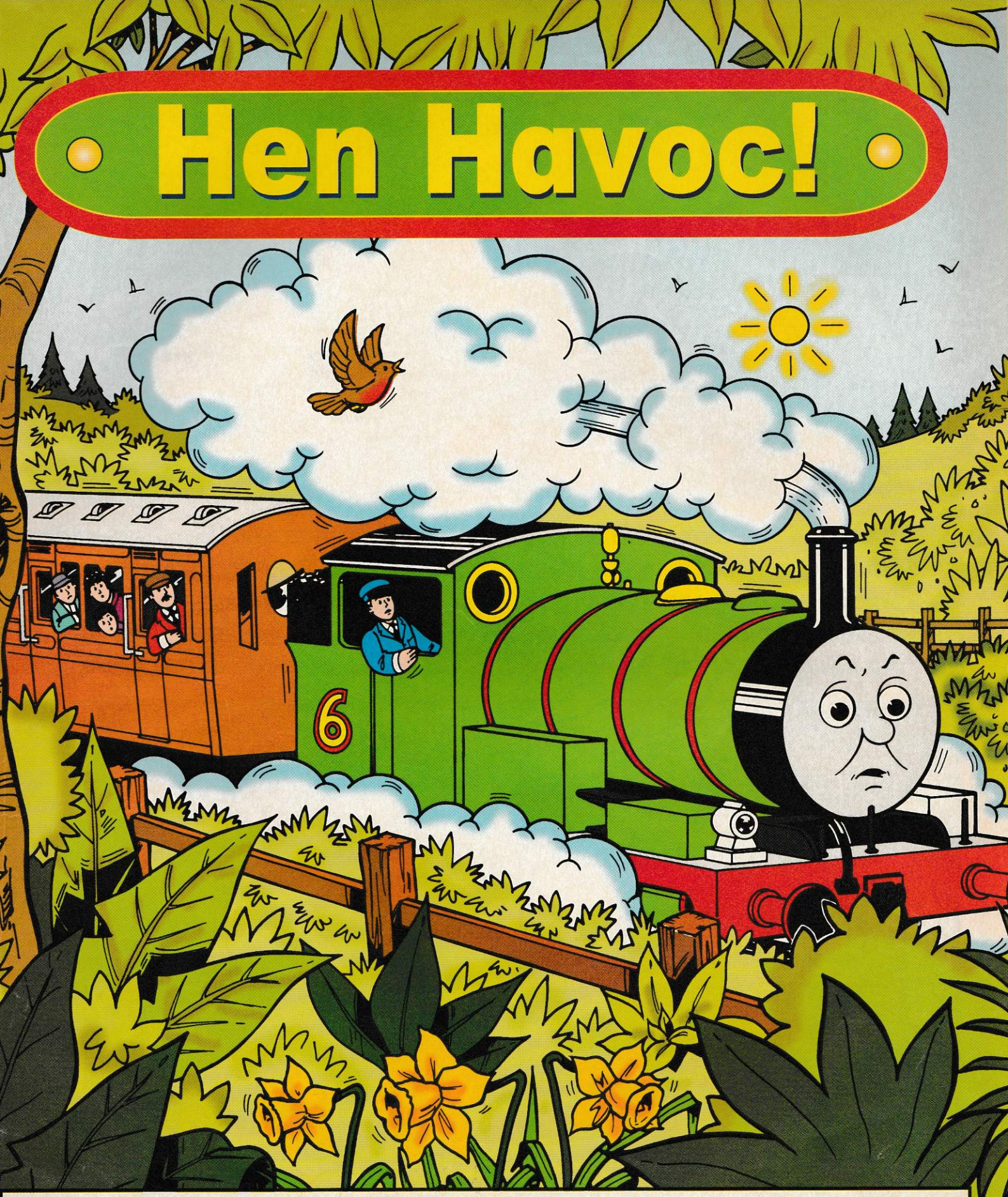
.....

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS is published fortnightly by MARVEL COMICS, a division of PANINI UK LTD. Managing Director: Richard Maskell; Managing Editor: Alan O'Keefe; Editorial team: Catherine Ard, Karen Brown & Lizzy Drake; Project Leader: Jason Quinn; Art Director: Helen Nally; Design team: Steve Rawlinson & Aleta Harley; Production: Mark Irvine & JP Fahy. Office of Publication: Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

All 'THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS' material copyright © W. H. Books. 1997. All television and merchandising rights licensed by W. H. Books. 1997 to Britt Allcroft (THOMAS) Ltd. exclusively worldwide. 'THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS' is a trademark of Britt Allcroft (Thomas) Limited. All rights reserved. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this publication with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the UK.

Distributed by Marketforce (UK) Ltd., 247 Tottenham Court Road, LONDON W1P OAU. Tel. 0171 261 5555. ISSN 0954-9390.

Hen Havoc!

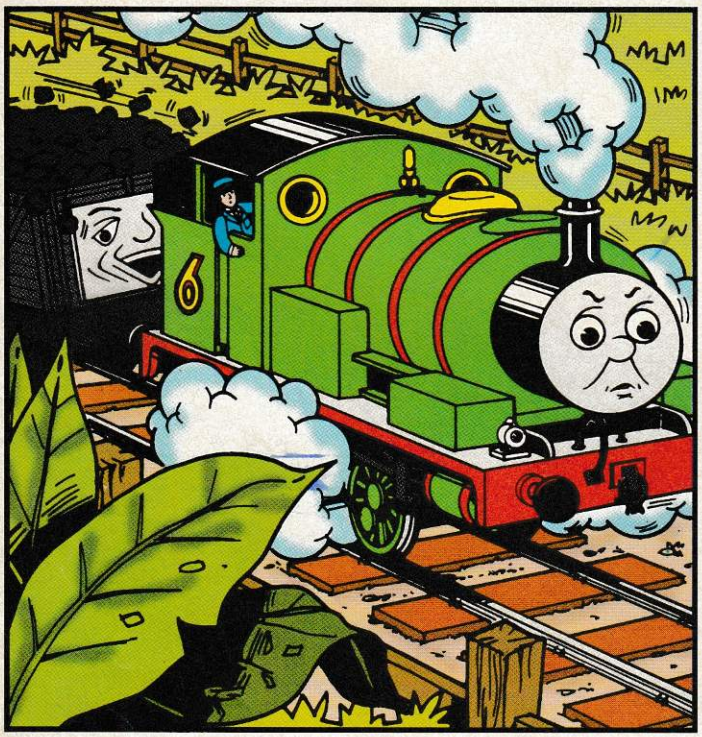


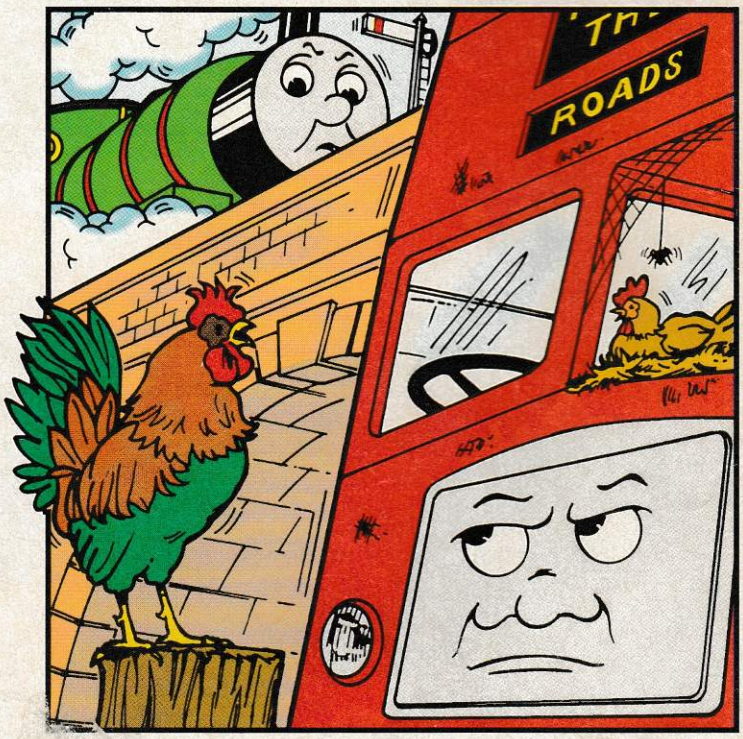
1. Percy was in a bad mood. As well as doing his own tasks, he had been given more jobs while Thomas was at the Works, being serviced. "It's not fair," sulked Percy. "I'm too busy!"

2. Percy had to take all Thomas' passengers trains. He rushed along, trying to save time. "Slow down!" cried Annie and Clarabel. "Thomas would never bump about like this!"

3. "I'm sorry. I've so much to do," said Percy. Some passengers complained because the journey was bumpy. "Go more carefully!" warned the Fat Controller.

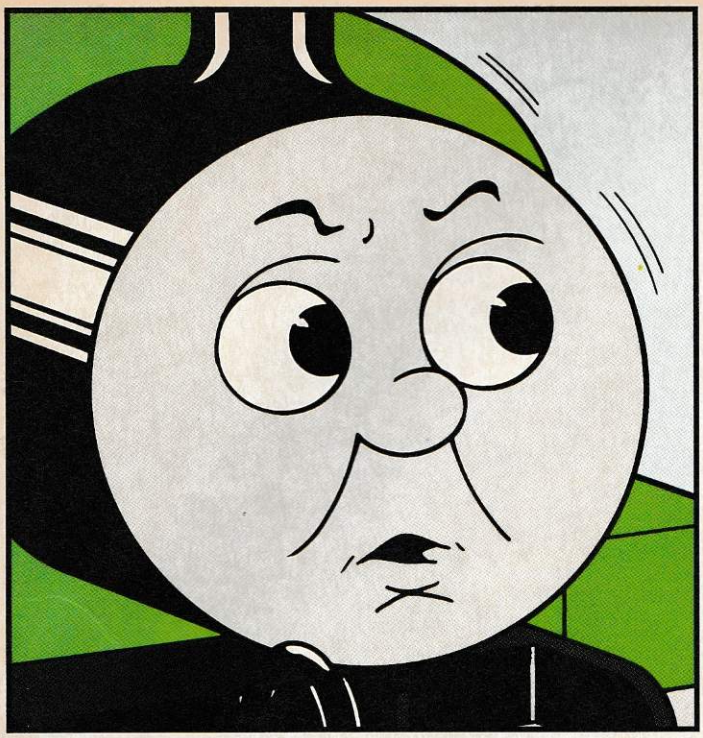
4. Percy was not very pleased. "I'm doing my best. Those passengers should be more grateful," he fumed. It wasn't any easier for him when he began pulling the goods trains.



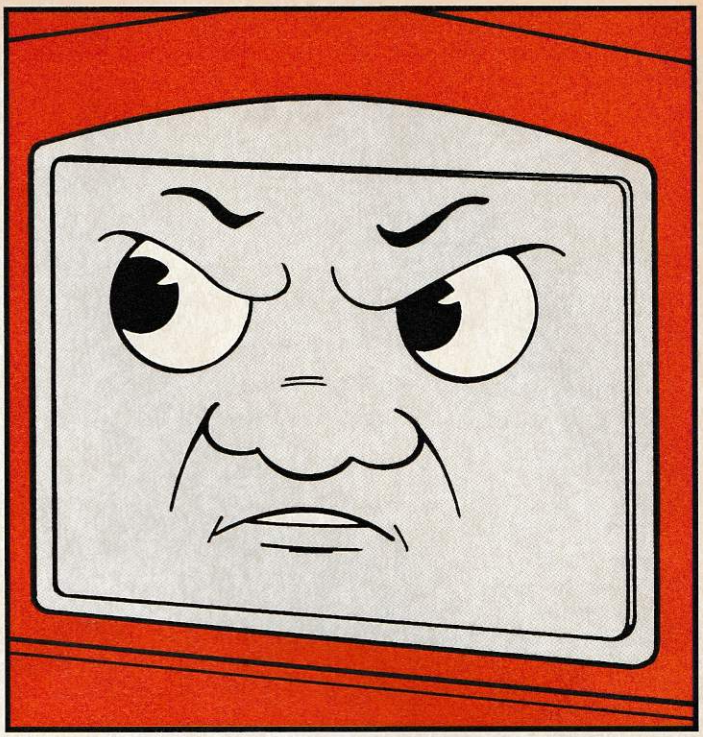


5. The trucks were being especially troublesome. They rocked and rolled about, spilling part of their loads on purpose. "I'm fed up with passengers and trucks," said Percy.

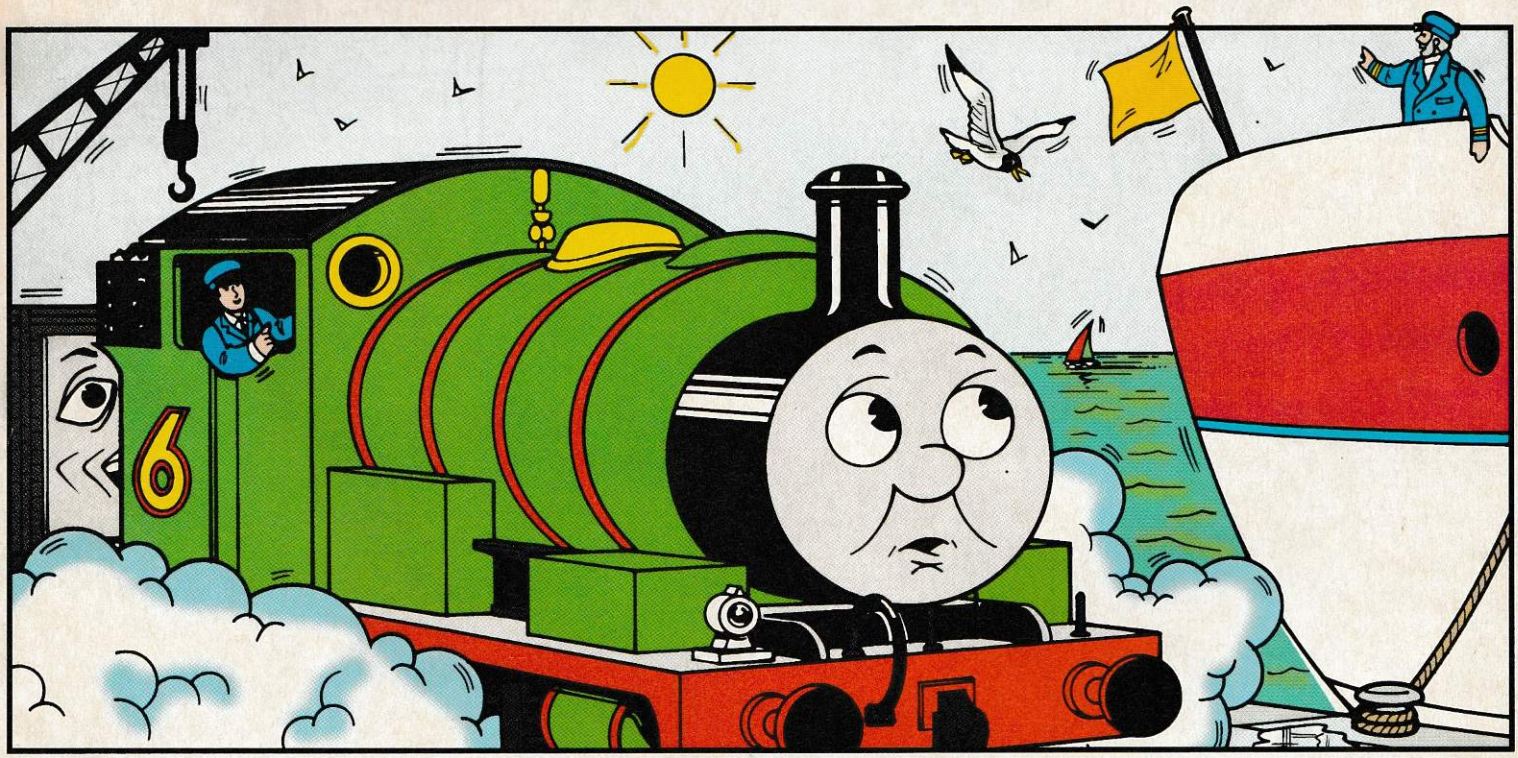
6. Then he had to stop at a signal by the bridge, near Bulgy. Since his accident, the double-decker bus was used as a henhouse. "It's all right for you!" shouted Percy.



7. “What is?” replied bad-tempered Bulgy. He didn’t like engines very much. “Well, I mean you can just sit there all day, doing nothing!” said Percy. “Some of us have to work!”



8. “Pah! You don’t have noisy hens clambering all over you,” grumbled Bulgy. “And the cockerel wakes me early, every morning, with his noisy crowing. I hardly get any sleep!”



9. “Nor do I because I’ve got one job after another to do,” sighed Percy. The signal changed and he steamed off. Later, the Fat Controller told Percy to make an urgent delivery.

10. He was sent to the Big Harbour to collect some special crates from a visiting ship. Percy was startled when, suddenly, he heard a cluck, cluck, clucking from inside them.

11. “If I didn’t know better, they sound like Bulgy’s hens!” gasped Percy. “They are hens, on their way to a farm,” explained his driver. They were loaded into Percy’s trucks.

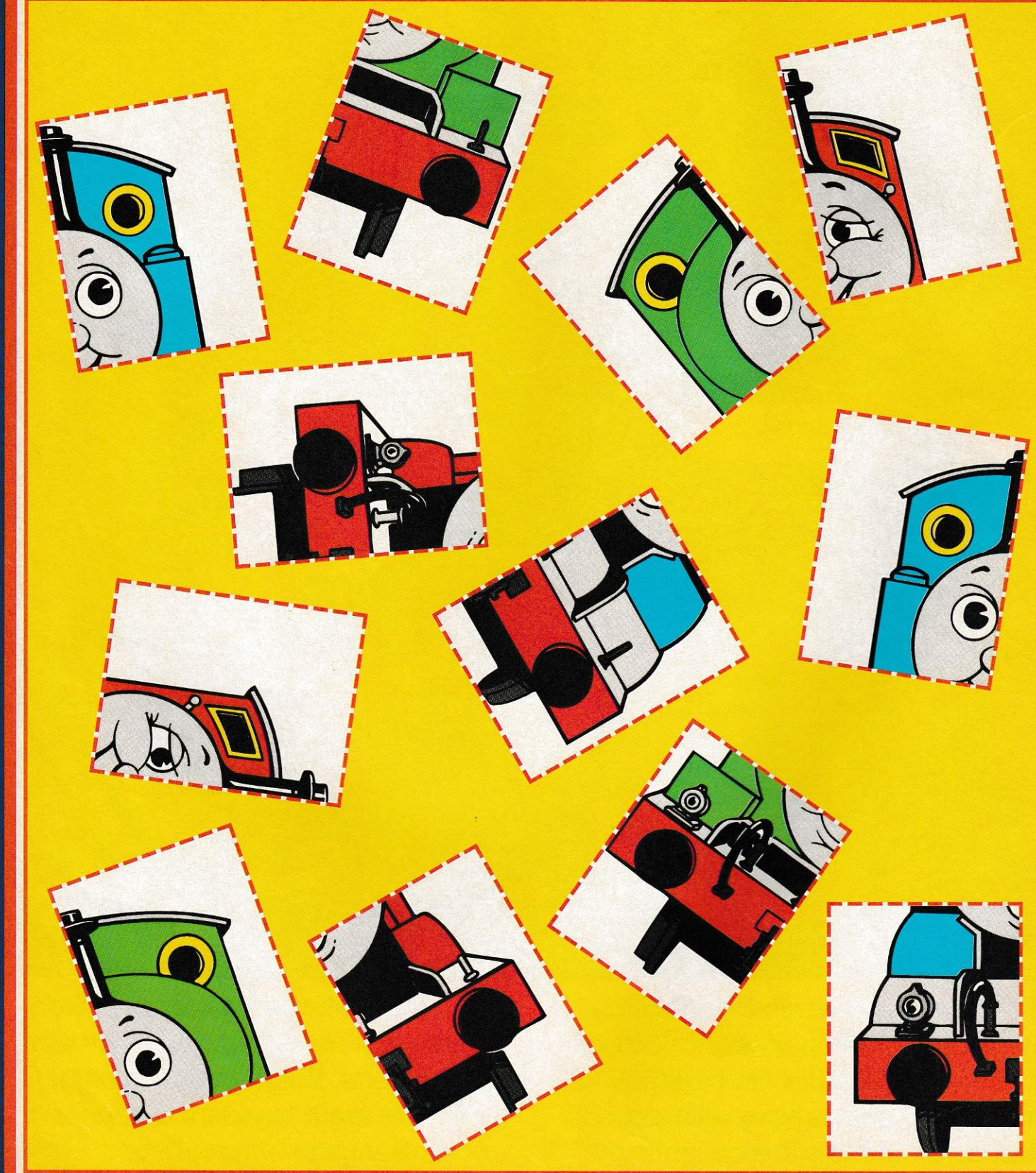
12. The farmer was waiting for him to arrive. But no sooner had Percy pulled up, when the hens escaped! They scampered noisily around his wheels. Some fluttered into the cab.

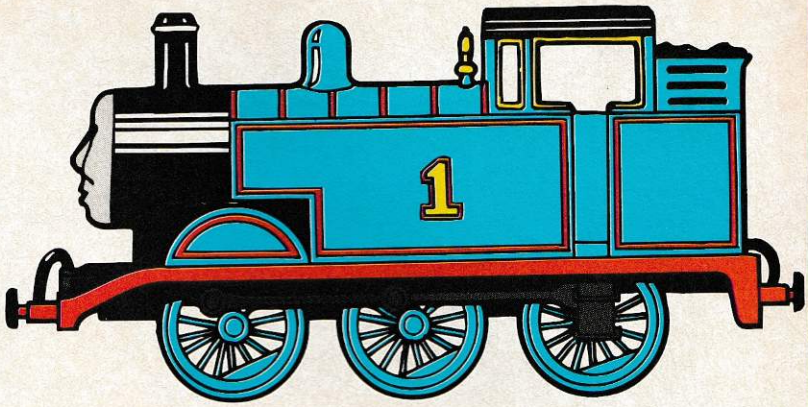
13. Others perched on top of Percy, and pecked at his paintwork. "Stop it," he yelled. "Before I'm badly scratched!" He was very relieved when all the hens were caught.

14. After Thomas was back at work, Percy met Bulgy again. "You're right about hens, Bulgy," called Percy. "They're more trouble than trucks or passengers, anyday!"

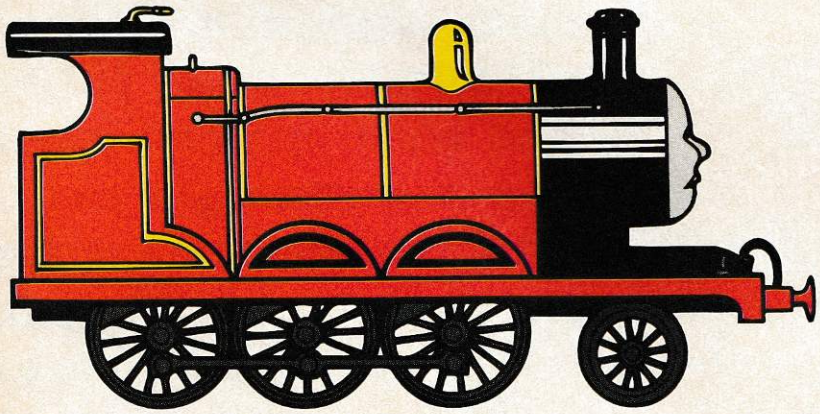
JIGSAW JUMBLE!

Ask a grown up to help you cut out the squares below. Place them in the jigsaw boxes to make pictures of 3 of your engine friends!

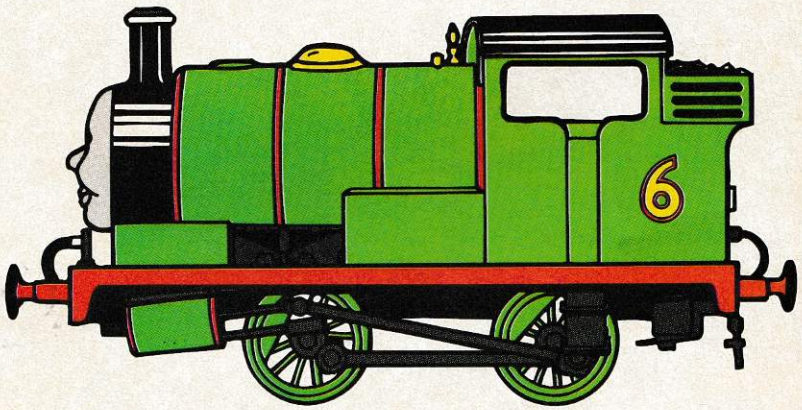




Thomas the Tank Engine - No. 1.

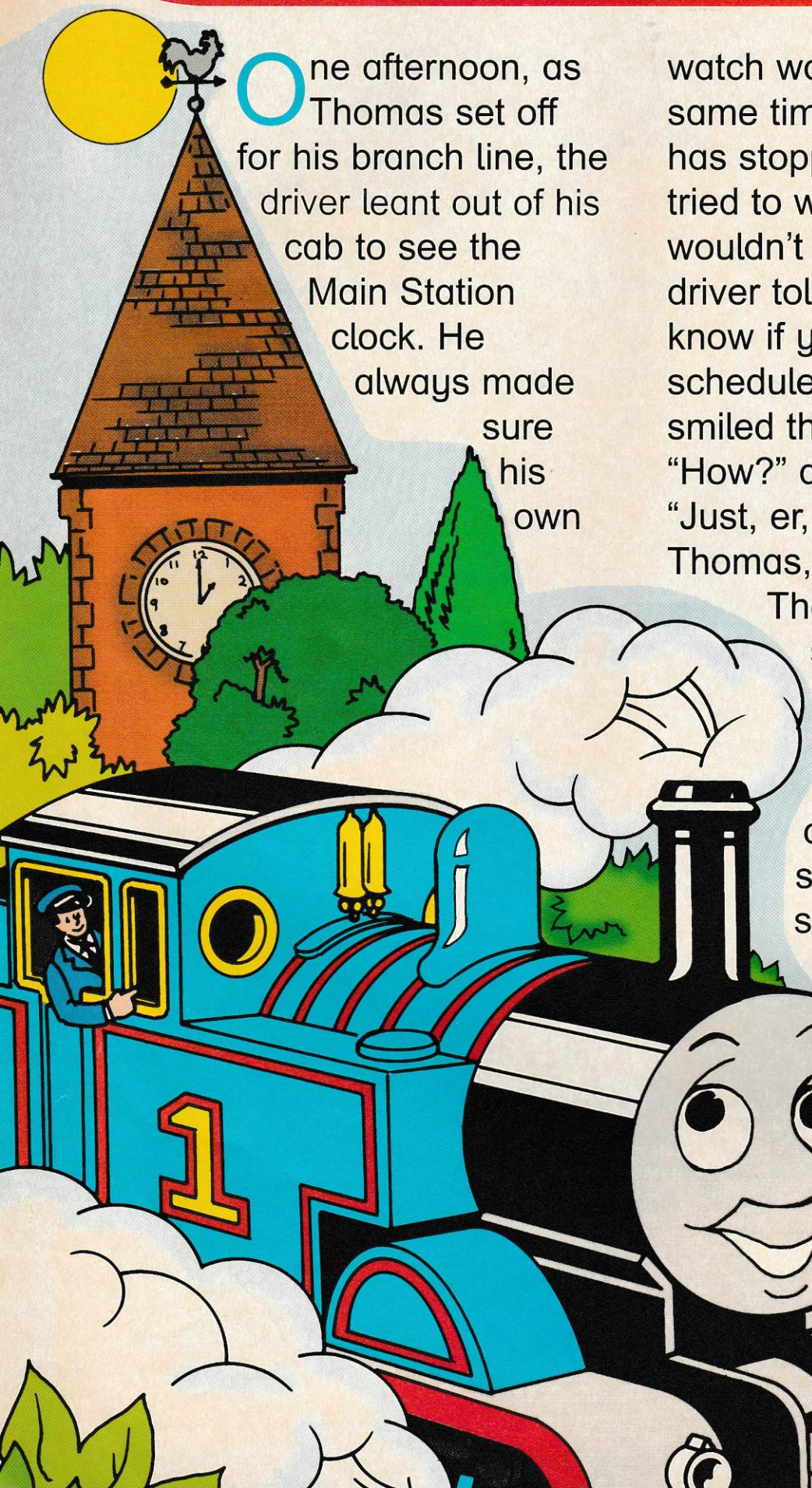


James the Red Engine - No. 5.



Percy the Small Engine - No. 6.

Thomas Keeps Time

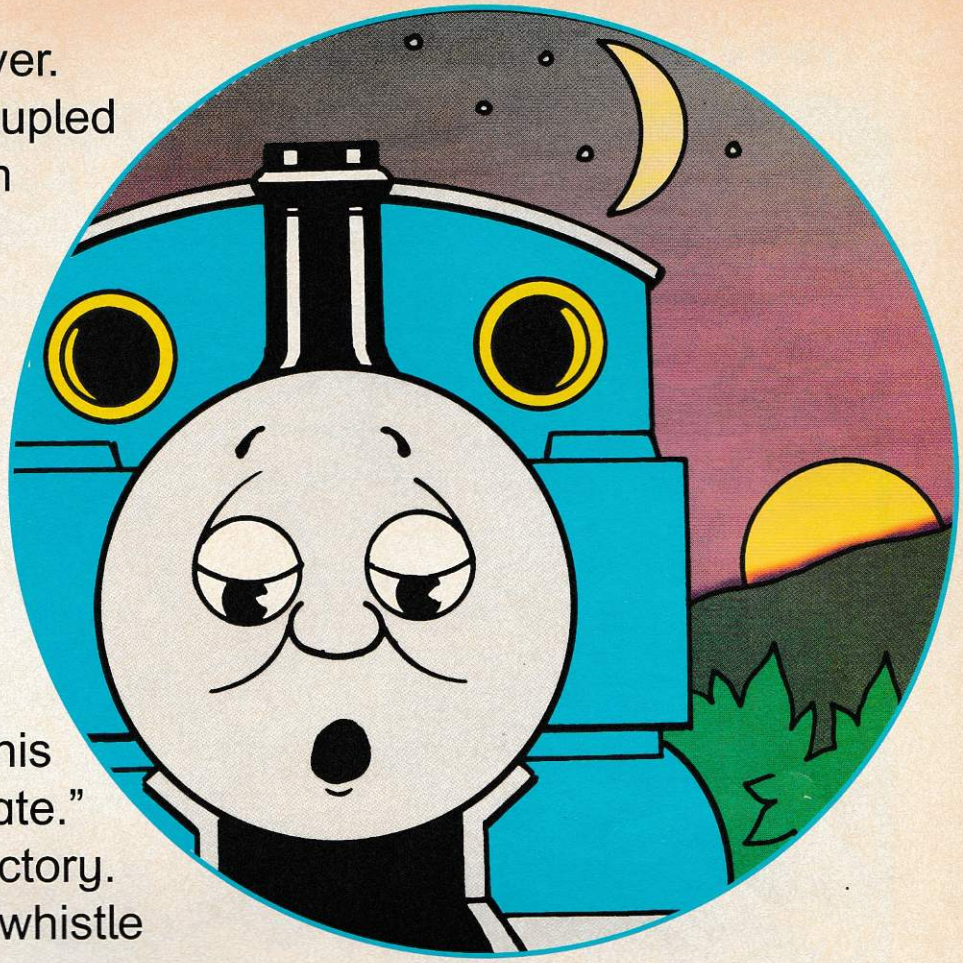


One afternoon, as Thomas set off for his branch line, the driver leant out of his cab to see the Main Station clock. He always made sure his own watch was set at exactly the same time. "Oh, no! My watch has stopped," said the driver. He tried to wind it up but the watch wouldn't start. "It's broken," the driver told Thomas. "Now I won't know if you're running on schedule." "Don't worry, I will," smiled the little tank engine. "How?" asked his driver, puzzled. "Just, er, watch and see," joked Thomas, mysteriously.

Thomas was due to collect some trucks at the next station at one o'clock. As he approached, he passed a village church. Thomas couldn't see the clock because of some tall trees. But he heard it chime once, loudly; BONNNG! "One o'clock. I'm right on

time!" he called to his driver.

When Thomas was coupled to his trucks, he puffed on his way again. He had to stop and wait at a signal, for what seemed like ages. Afterwards, Thomas rattled along at full speed. His next job was to deliver some parcels to another station. "We're due just after two o'clock," called his driver. "I hope we're not late." Near the station was a factory. Thomas heard its hooter whistle twice as lots of men and women went inside. Pheep! Pheep! "Two o'clock. The afternoon shift is beginning," smiled Thomas. 'I'm right on time!"



While he busily continued with his work, Thomas found all sorts of other ways to tell the time. He passed the post office just as the postman was making his regular mid-afternoon collection. "I always see him there at three o'clock," said Thomas.

Later, he heard the school bell ringing. Then he saw all the children hurry out to go home. "School's over for today," thought Thomas. "It must be four o'clock."

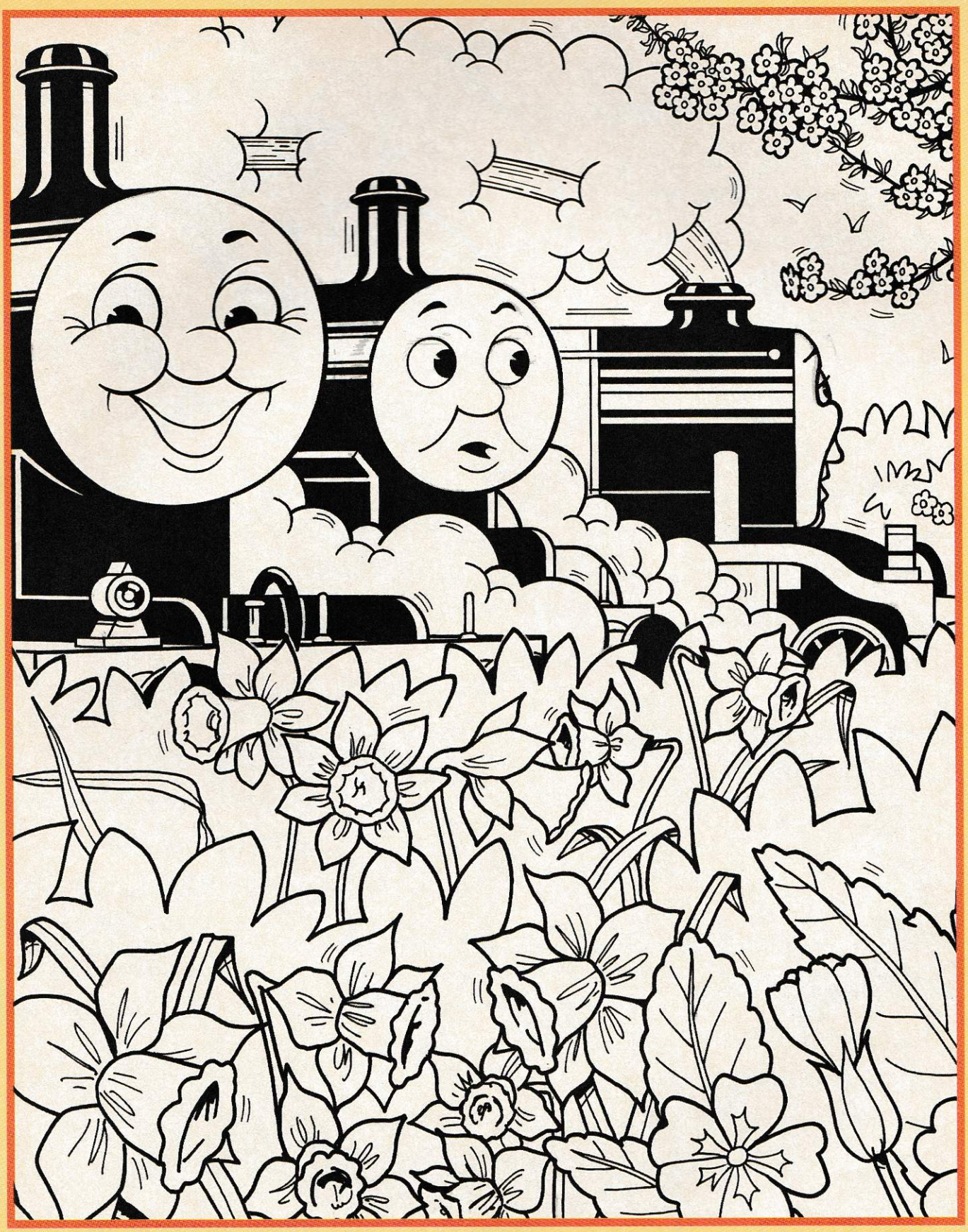
When Thomas passed a farm, the farmer was bringing his cows back to the shed. "The farmer always milks his cows at five o'clock," Thomas told his driver. "Clever Thomas! I didn't need my watch, thanks to you," laughed his driver, when they finally returned to the Main Station. "But I'd better bring my spare one tomorrow, just in case!"

Thomas had worked hard. He felt really tired. "I know what time it is now," he yawned, as he rolled into the engine shed. "Bedtime!"

A read & colour story

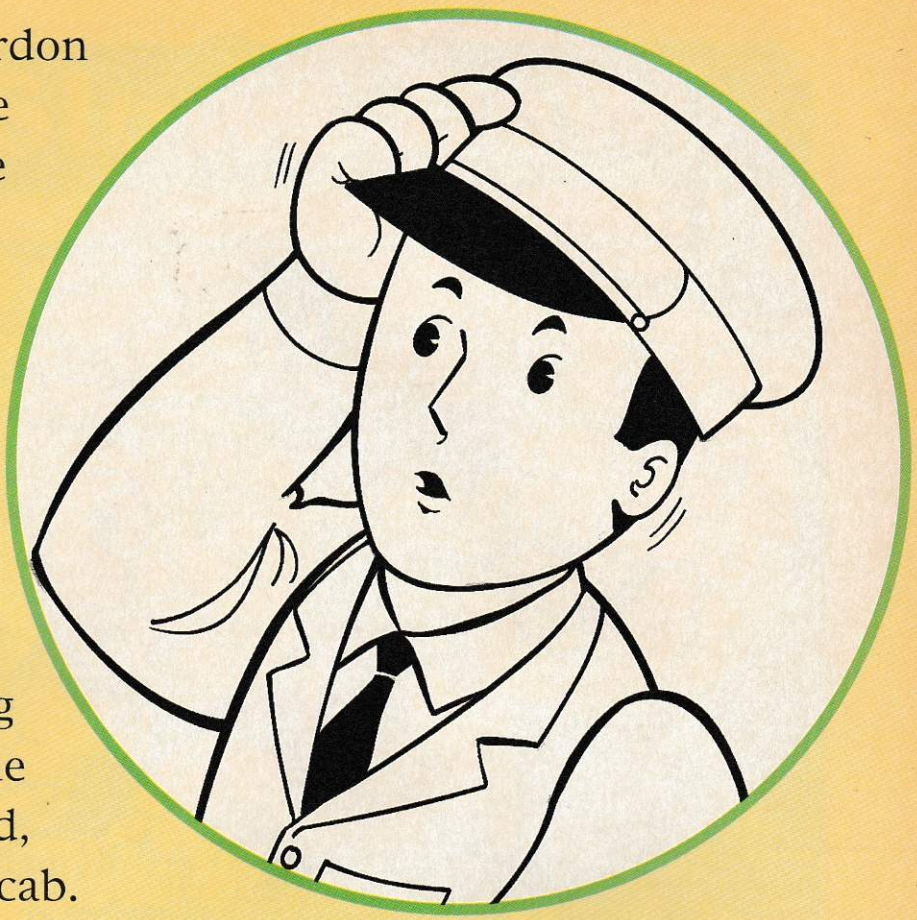
Gordon Slows Down!

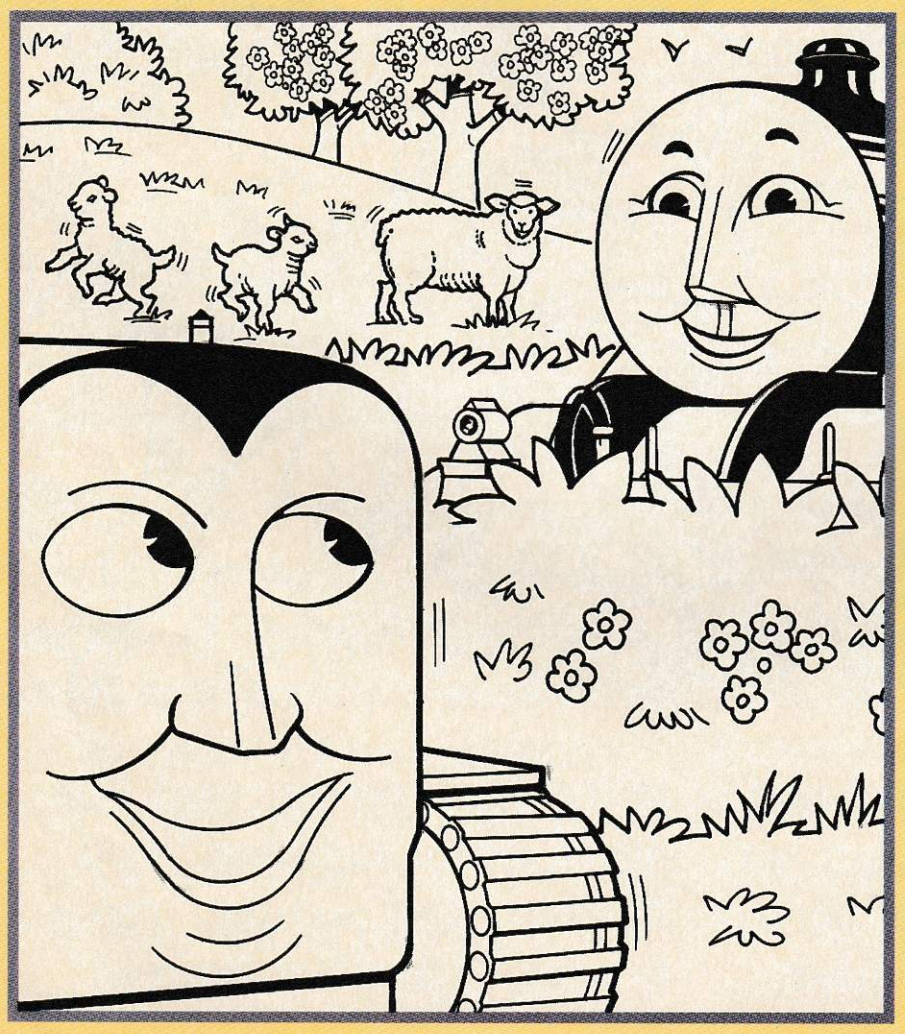
1 Gordon the Express was the fastest engine on Sodor. He was always speeding about, dashing everywhere as quickly as he could. He was in such a hurry he never had time to notice anything. "Did you see the baby lambs playing in the fields?" asked Thomas, when Gordon returned from a trip. But Gordon hadn't noticed them. "I've got to dash!" he said, setting off again. "An Express has to be on time you know!" When he returned James and Thomas were talking about how pretty the blossom looked on the trees.



2 "Can't say I noticed," said Gordon, as he got ready to go again. He didn't notice the daffodils in the fields either, or the ducks on the pond. "You never notice anything," said Thomas. "I've no time," replied Gordon. "I'm a fast Express!"

3 A few days later, Gordon was speeding back to the station after taking some passengers to the harbour. He came to a signal and had to stop. Gordon waited and waited but the signal didn't change. His driver got out to see what was holding them up but there was nothing in sight. "I'd better phone up and report it!" he said, quickly returning to his cab.



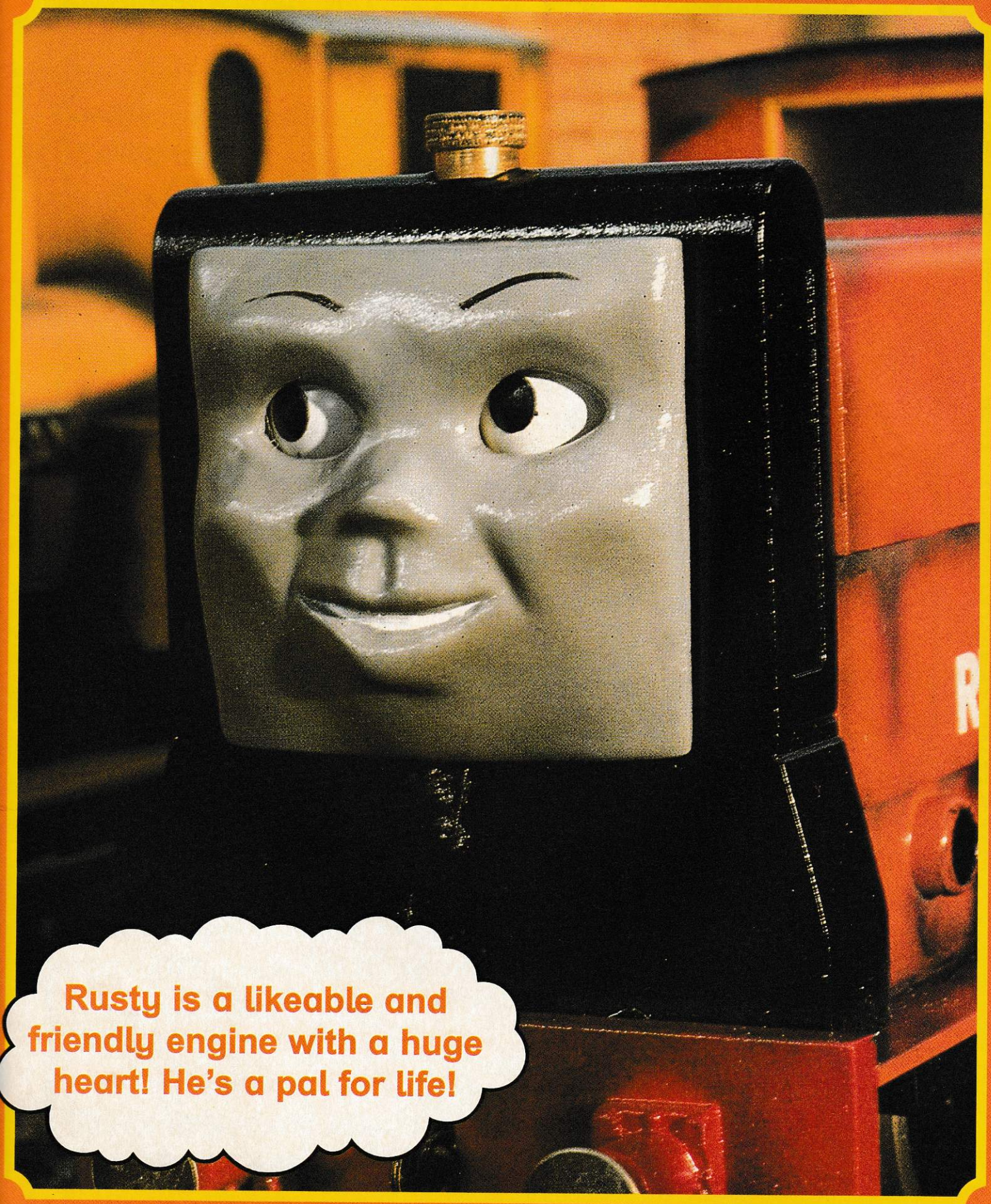


4 Gordon sighed and looked around. They were out in the countryside, surrounded by big, beautiful, green fields. He could see the pretty blossom on the trees and some baby lambs playing in a field. Terence the Tractor was busy ploughing another field. Gordon peeped at him and Terence tooted back. He was very surprised to see Gordon the Express standing still for once!

5 Then Gordon saw a mother duck leading her babies to a pond. The ducklings were going to take their first swim. They splashed about under the watchful eye of their mother. Gordon smiled at the pretty sight. Just then, his driver shouted out of the window. "The signal's broken. An engineer's coming to fix it, we can carry on." Gordon was sad to leave. He had enjoyed looking around. Later, at the station he told the other engines about seeing the baby ducks on the pond. "You mean you actually slowed down to look at them?" asked Thomas, surprised. "Even an Express has to slow down sometimes!" smiled Gordon.

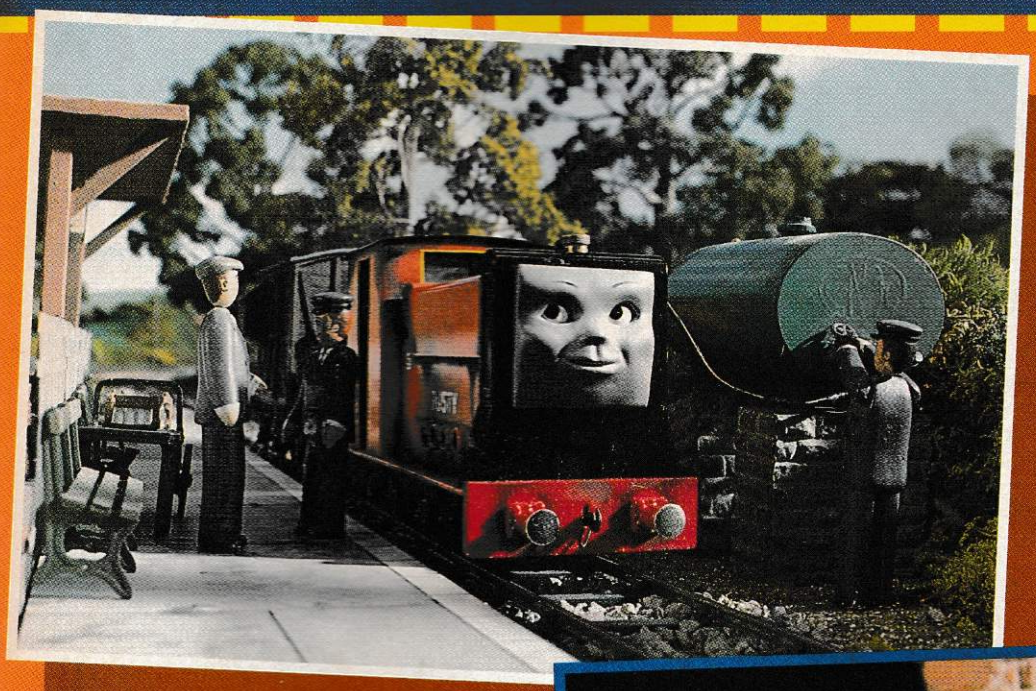
The end

All abou

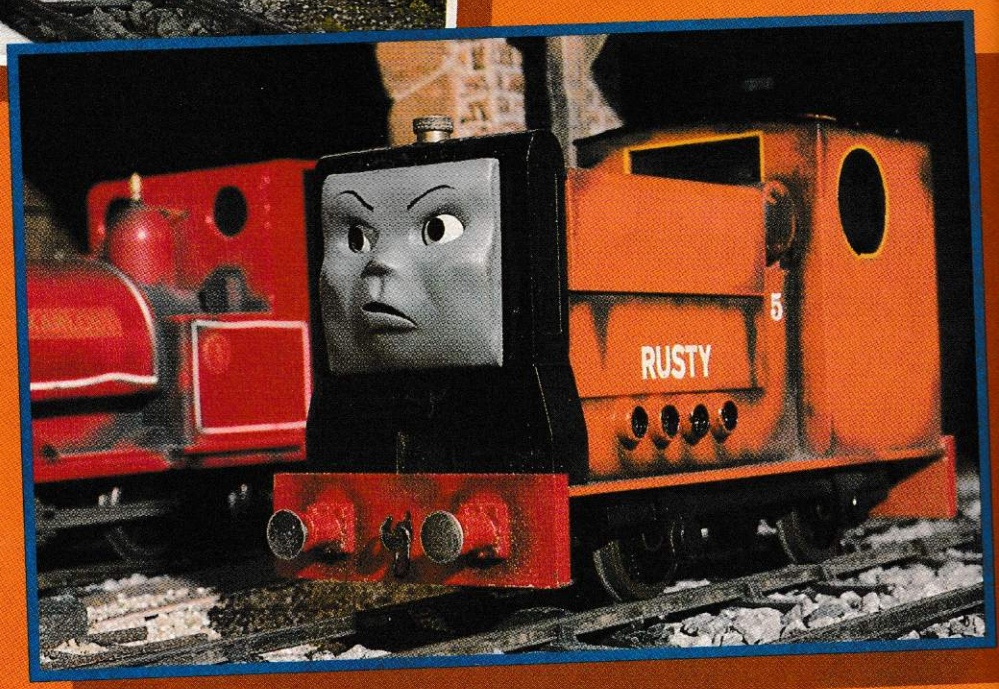


Rusty is a likeable and friendly engine with a huge heart! He's a pal for life!

t Rusty!



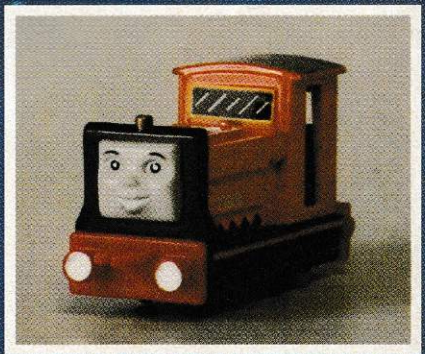
Nothing is too much trouble for Rusty. He is a hard worker who loves helping others!



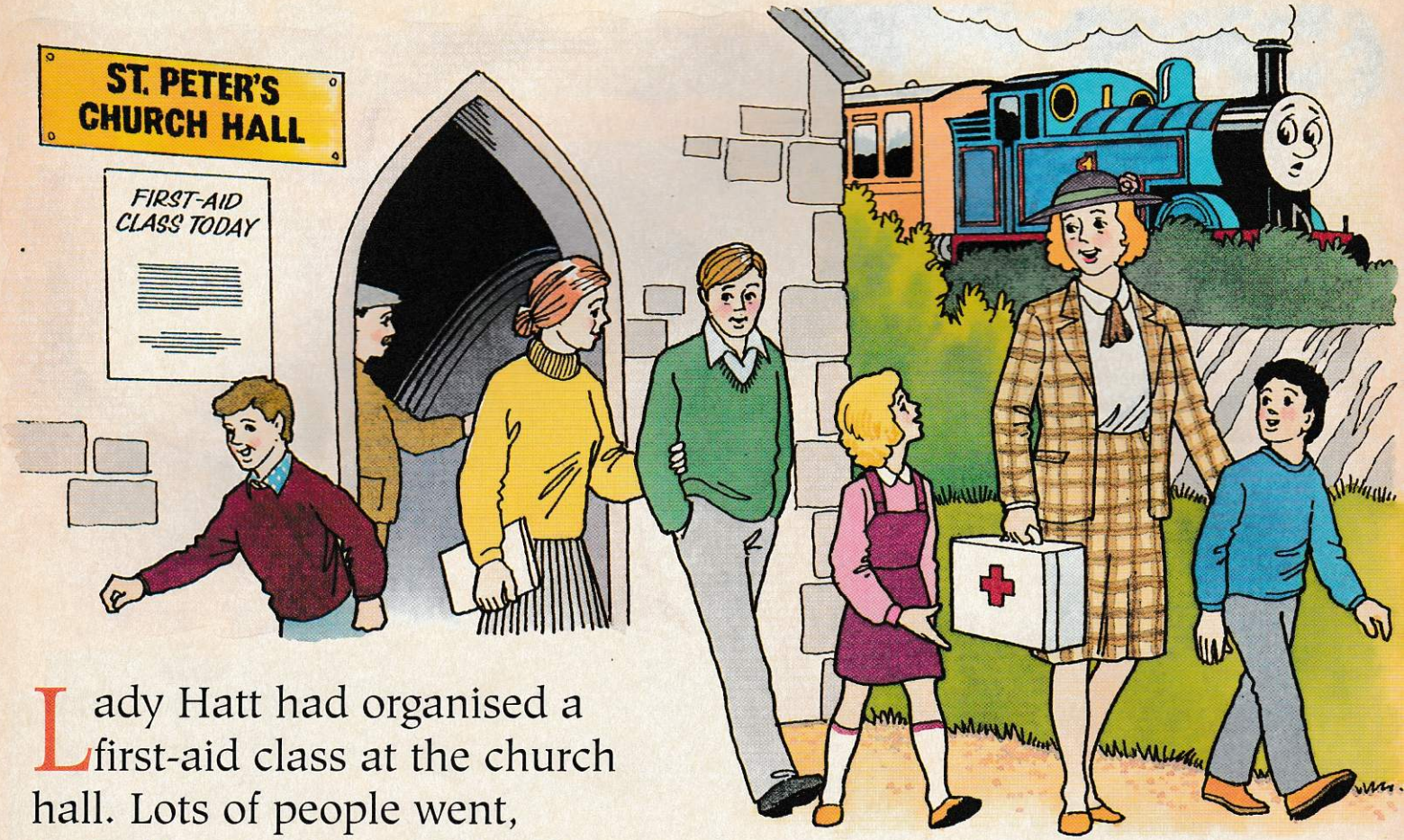
Rusty is always on the lookout for adventure and is fearless in nature!

Win a model Rusty!

Five lucky winners will win a splendid model of Rusty from the ERTL engine range! Just send a postcard, with your name, age and address to: Thomas/249 model competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ. Closing date: May 7th, 1997. The first five names out of our postbag after the closing date will receive their very own Rusty!

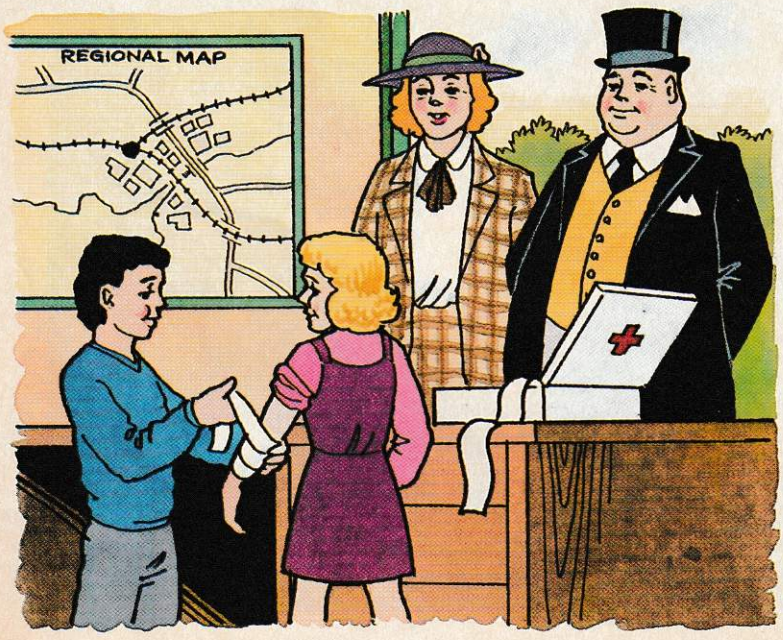


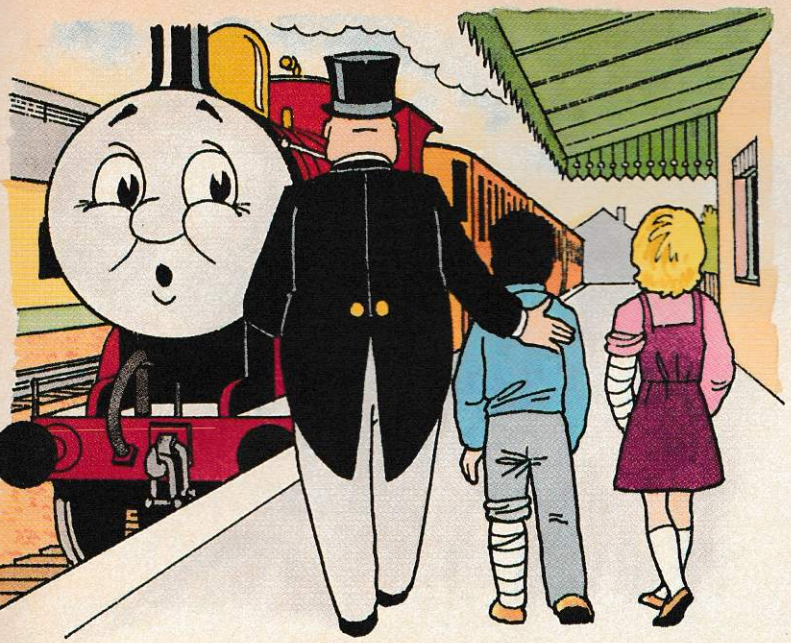
Helping James



Lady Hatt had organised a first-aid class at the church hall. Lots of people went, including Stephen and Bridget. The nurses showed everyone how to tie bandages properly. "First-aid is very important," said Bridget. "It could help someone who's been hurt until they can get to a doctor or to hospital," added Stephen.

After the class, they travelled back to the Main Station, aboard Thomas' passenger train. They couldn't wait to show their grandfather what they had learned. Thomas looked a little worried when he saw Lady Hatt carrying a first-aid box. "Who's been hurt?" he asked. "Nobody, Thomas. We've been to a special first-aid class," Bridget explained. "And it's important to have a first-aid box handy, especially at home," Lady Hatt added. It was full of items such as cotton wool, plasters and bandages.





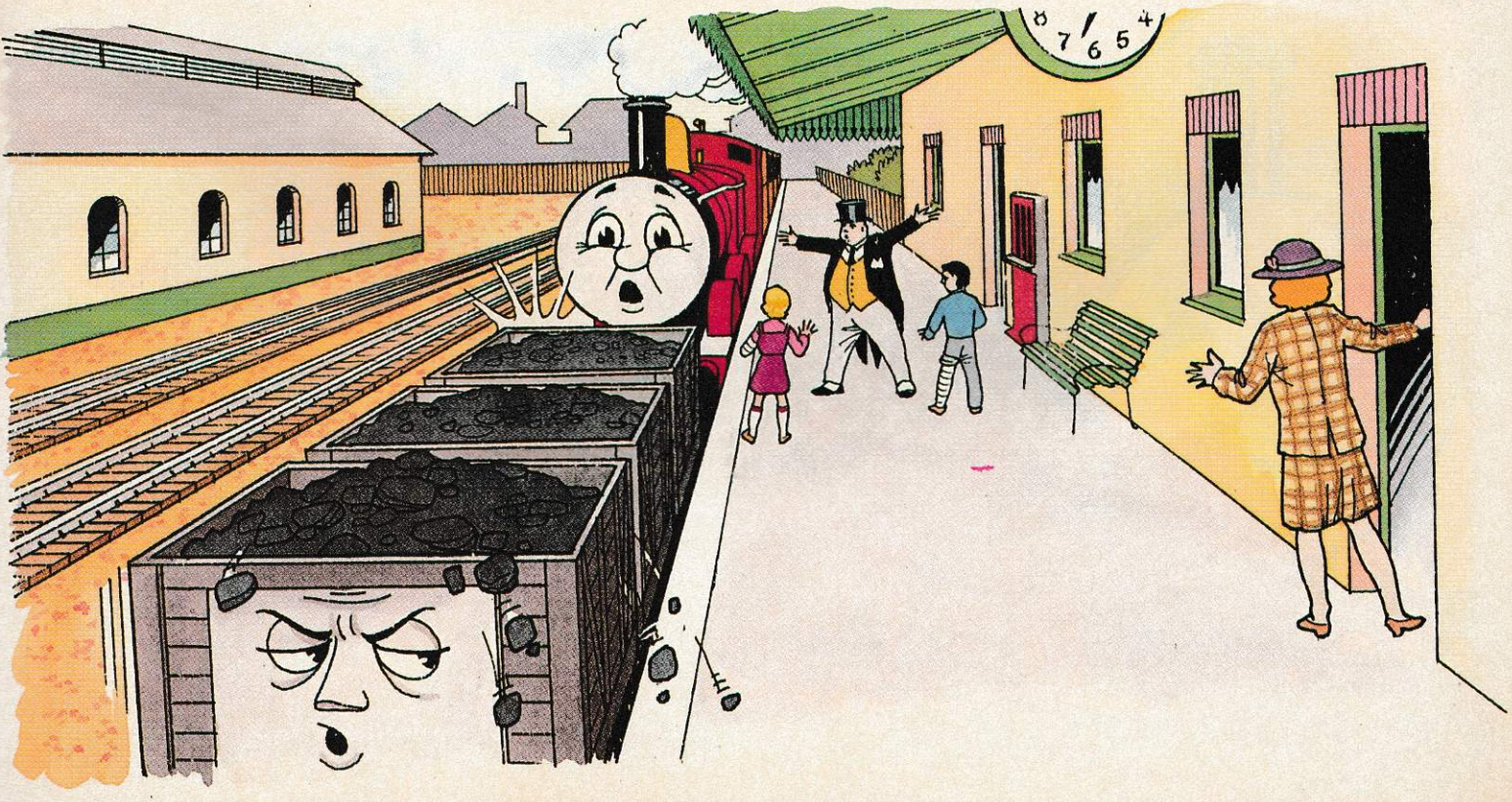
The children asked to borrow some bandages from the box to practise first-aid on each other. Lady Hatt watched Stephen, while he carefully bound a bandage around his sister's arm.

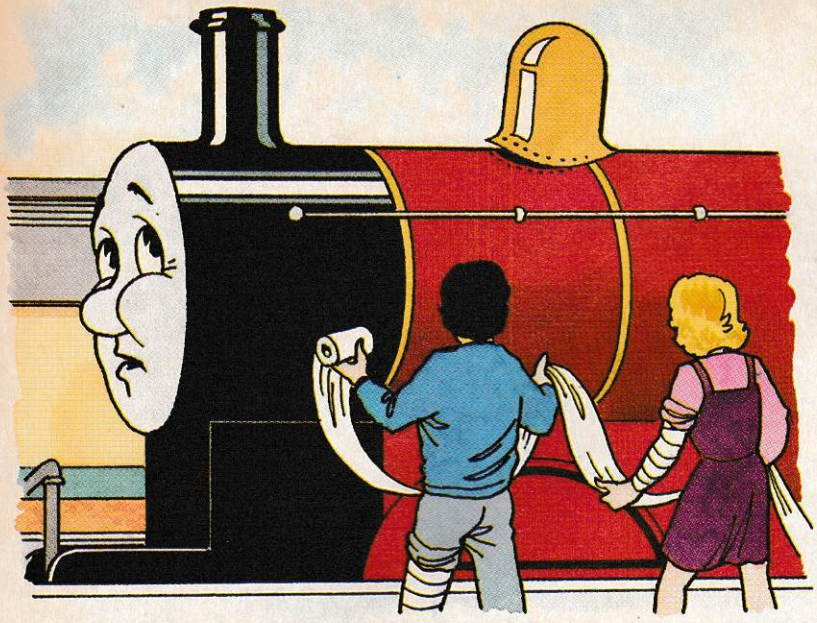
Next, Bridget tied one on Stephen's leg. "Well done, you two," said the Fat Controller, as he watched. "But remember, never touch the first-aid box without an adult's permission!"

Soon, it was time for the Fat Controller to return to work. He strode across the platform towards James, who was waiting patiently for his next job.

"I know, let's show James our bandages!" said Stephen. Imagine James' surprise when he saw the children were bandaged up! He was staring so hard, he quite forgot to watch where he was going!

James bumped into a line of trucks that were filled with stone from the quarry. CLANG! What a noise! The bump made James' wheels wobble! "Upon my word! Are you all right?" asked the Fat Controller. "I think so, Sir," replied James, who was badly





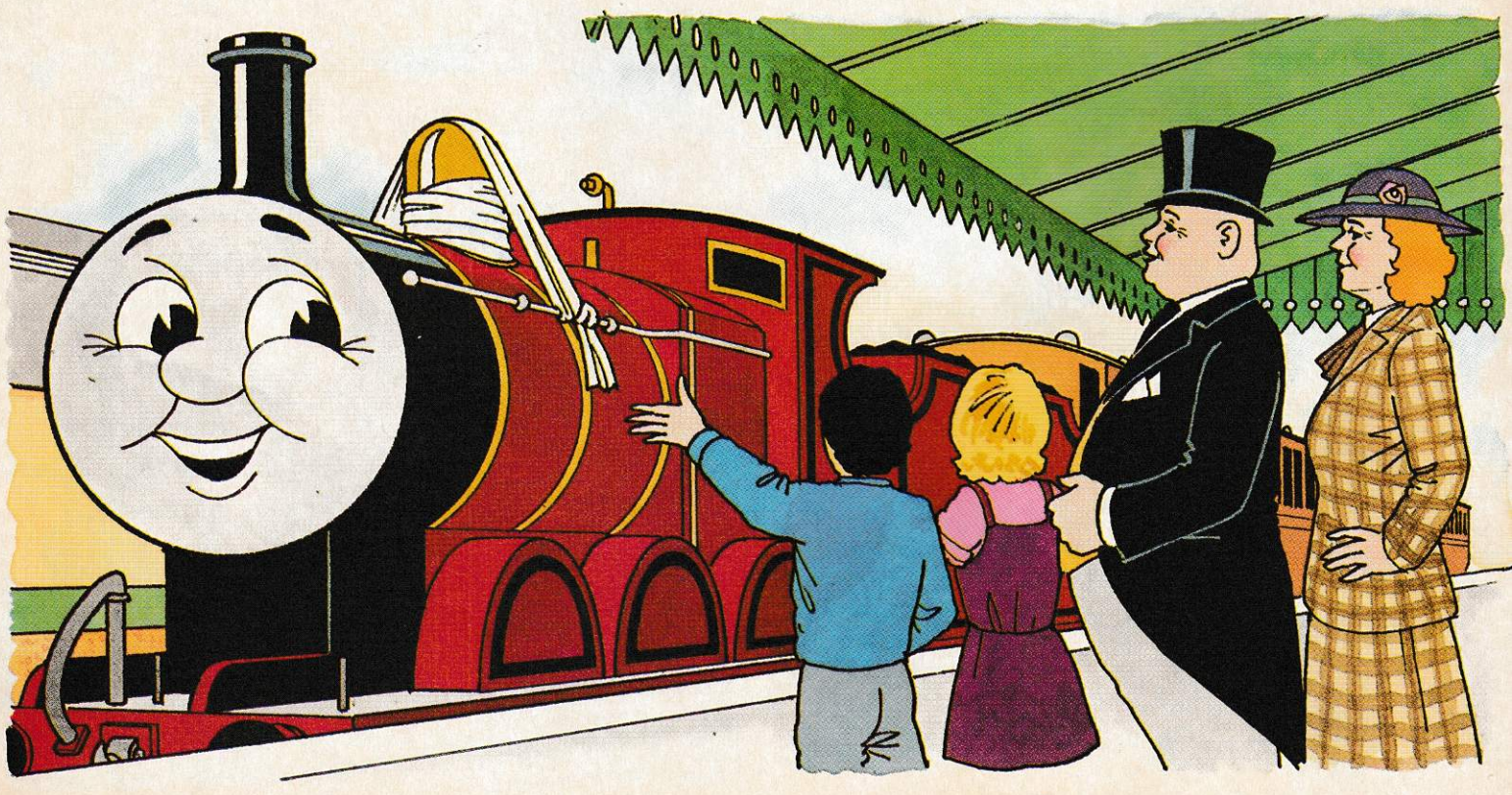
shaken. But as he backed up again, something was wrong. "My shiny brass dome has come loose!" gasped James. "It's our fault," said Bridget. "We didn't mean to startle you. We've been practising how to use bandages." "I'll send James to the Works," said the Fat Controller. "He'll be as good as new in no time."

"But please, Sir," began James, anxiously, "what if my wobbly dome falls off on the way?" "Oh dear! I hadn't thought of that," said the Fat Controller, thoughtfully.

The children had a splendid idea. They asked Lady Hatt if they could have another bandage from her first-aid box, explaining their idea to her first.

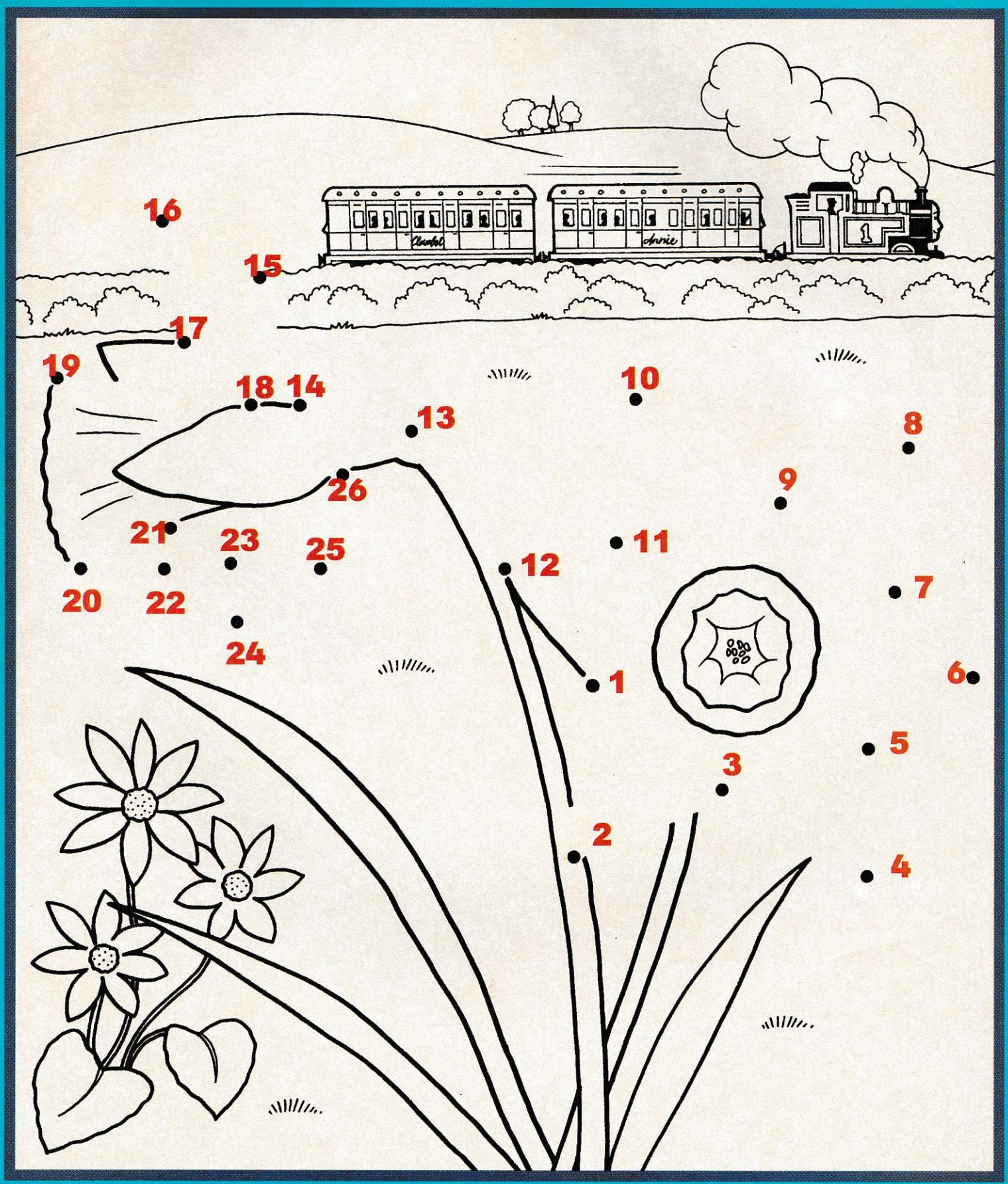
James' driver used the bandage to hold the dome safely in place. "Problem solved," said the Fat Controller. James felt much better, although he did look very strange with a bandage tied right around his dome. "Even engines need first-aid sometimes!" smiled Bridget.

THE END



Dot to dot!

Join the dots to see a spring flower!

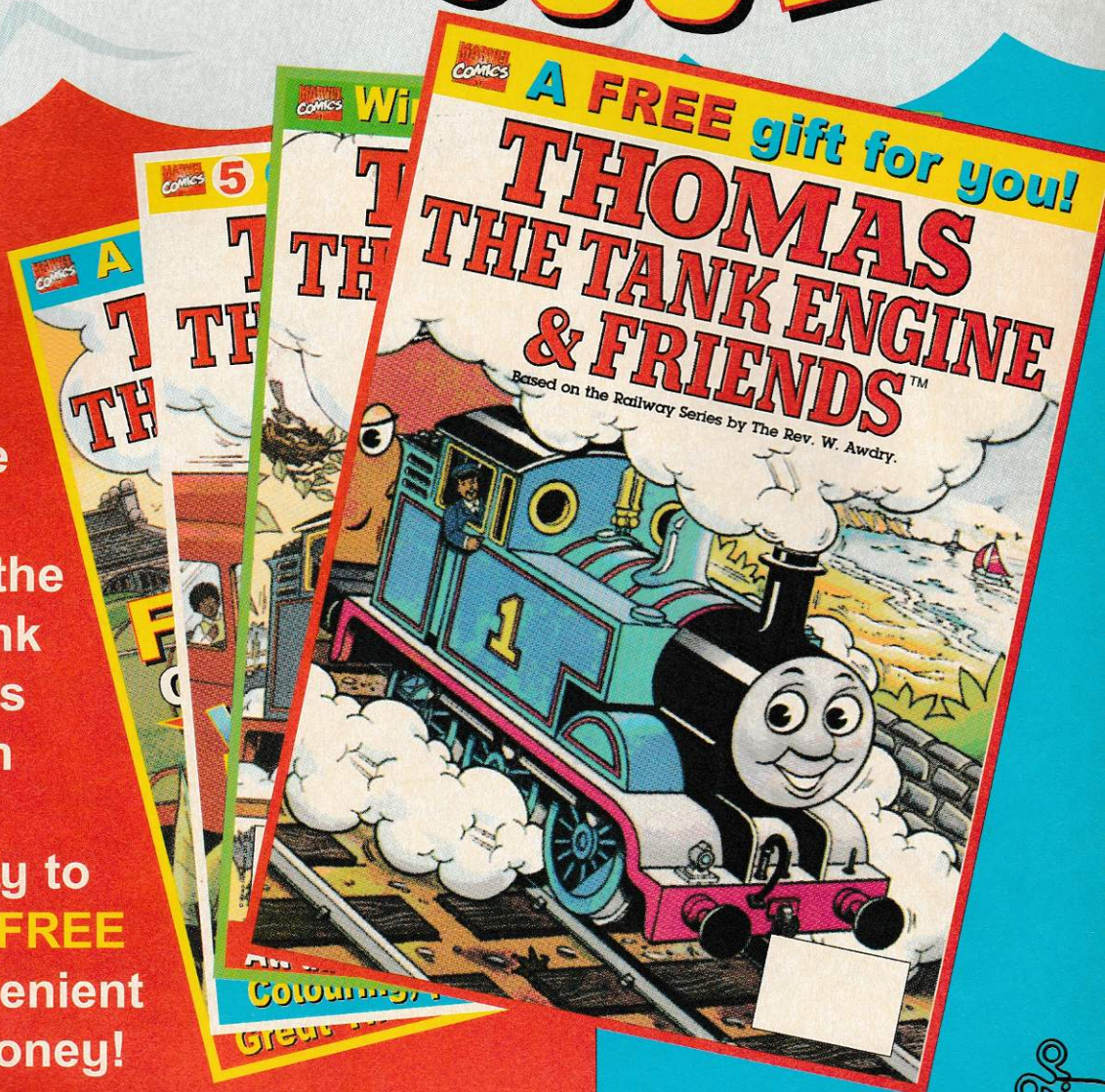


When you have finished colour this page!

2 FREE ISSUES

"Calling all parents!"

Why not take out a subscription to the Thomas The Tank Engine & Friends magazine? Each issue can be delivered directly to your front door FREE of charge! Convenient and value for money!



Subscribe to Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends for now and receive 26 issues for the price of 24!

I wish to subscribe to Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends for 12 months (25th & 26th Issue FREE) for £28.80. Postage and packaging is FREE!

Child's name.....Address.....

.....

Post code..... Date of birth.....

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £..... made payable to Panini UK Ltd.
Please charge £..... to my Visa/Mastercard or call Credit card hotline on 01858 410510.

Card number ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Expiry date .....

Card holder's signature .....

Parent's/donor's name: Mr/Mrs/Ms ..... Address (if different from child's)

.....

.....Post code .....

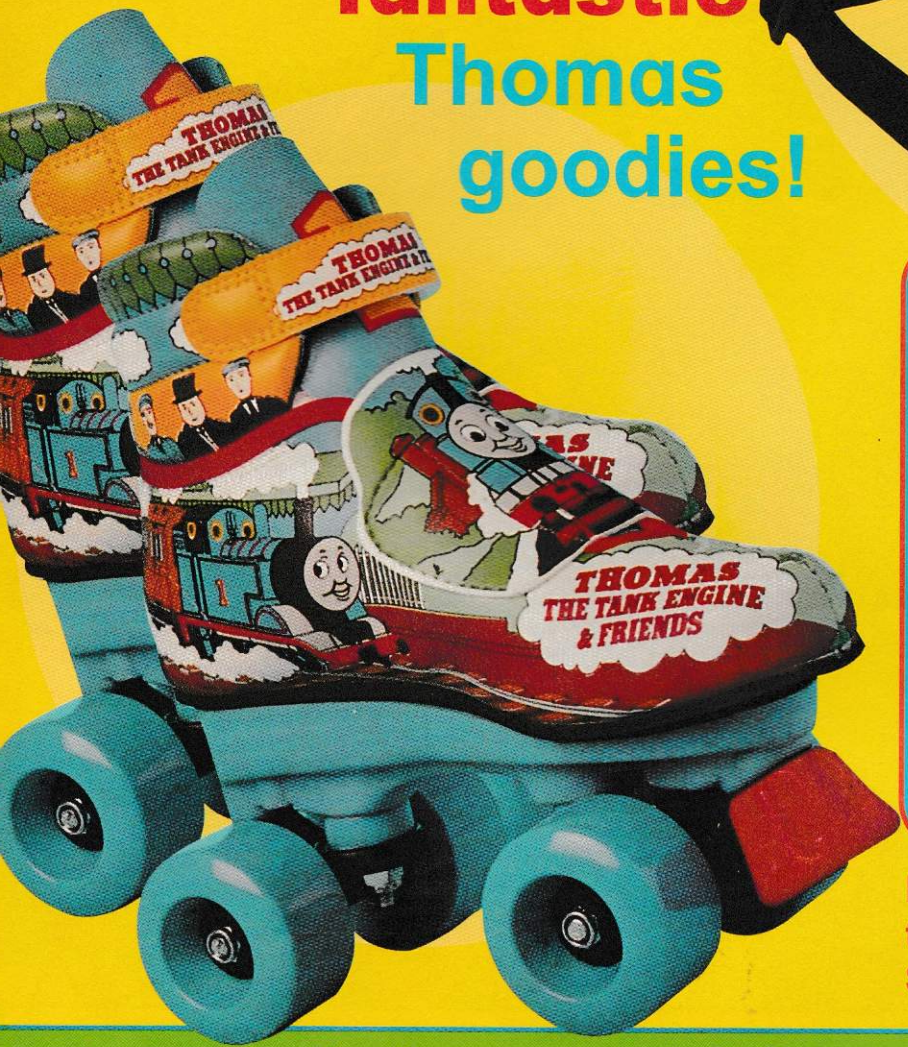
Please send to: Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends Subscriptions, PO Box 503, Leicester, LE99 0AD.

On occasion, we may permit other reputable companies to make offers of products or services to our customers. Please tick here if you would prefer not to receive details of any special offers or new products. ☐

0089 P

Competition!

5 lucky readers will *whizz away* with these **fantastic** Thomas goodies!



To win some Thomas rollerskates and a safety helmet, just tell us:

What colour is the Fat Controller's car?

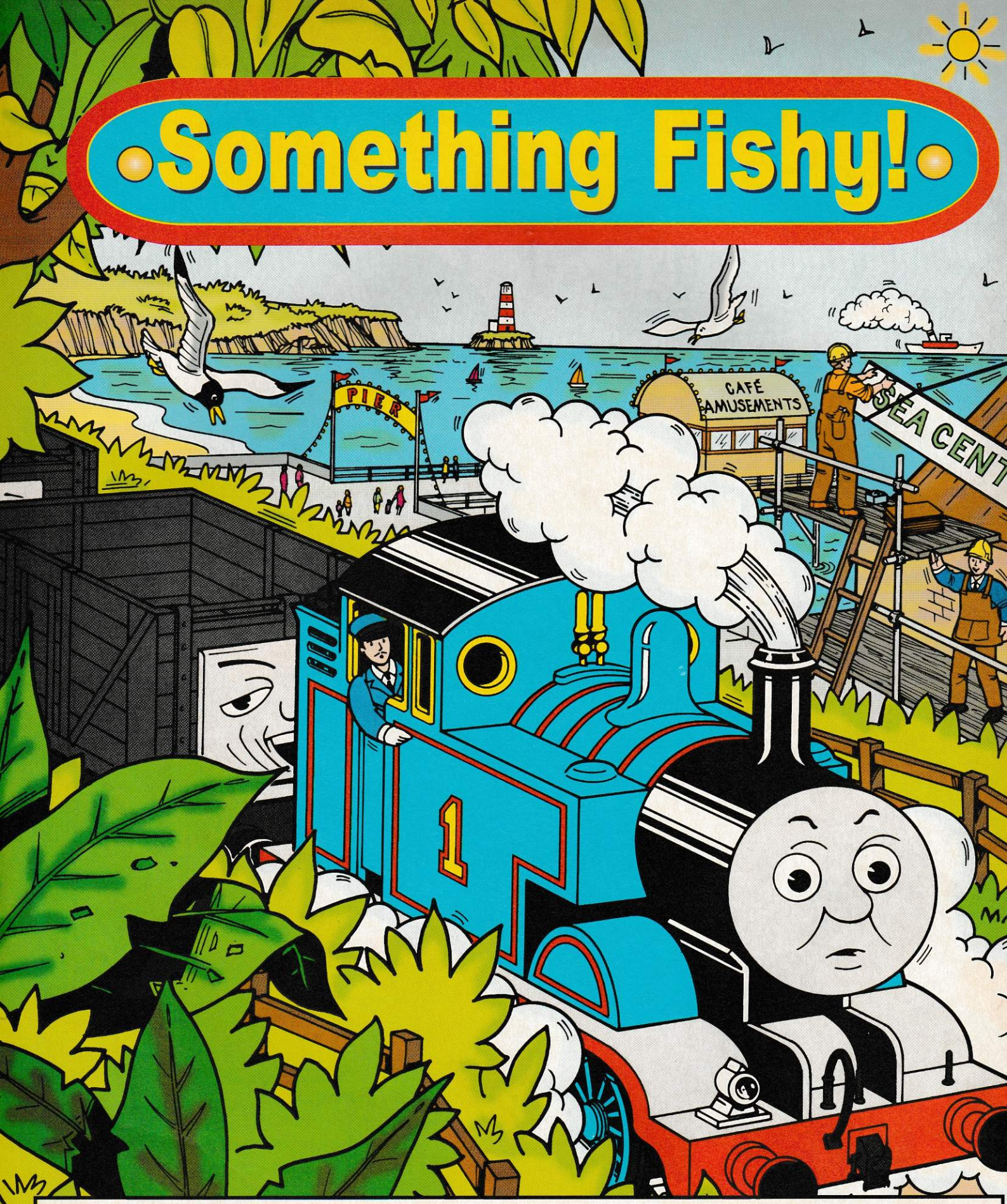
For further information about these products, contact; MV Sports & Leisure on 01675 443838.

Send your answer, including your shoe size, on a postcard to: Thomas/249 Competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

All entries must be received by 7th May 1997.

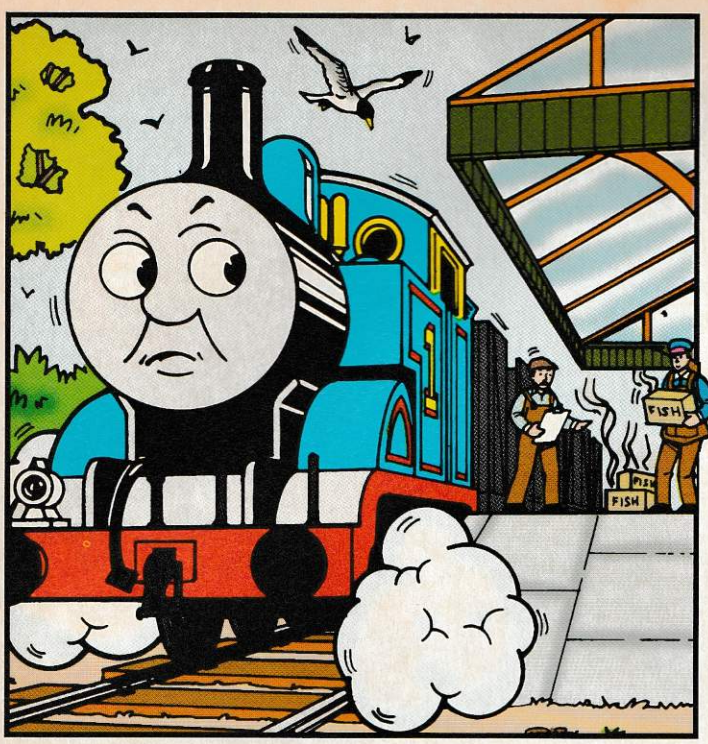
This competition is open to all readers other than employees and their families of participating companies. We cannot accept any responsibility for prizes lost or damaged in the post. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence shall be entered into.

Something Fishy!

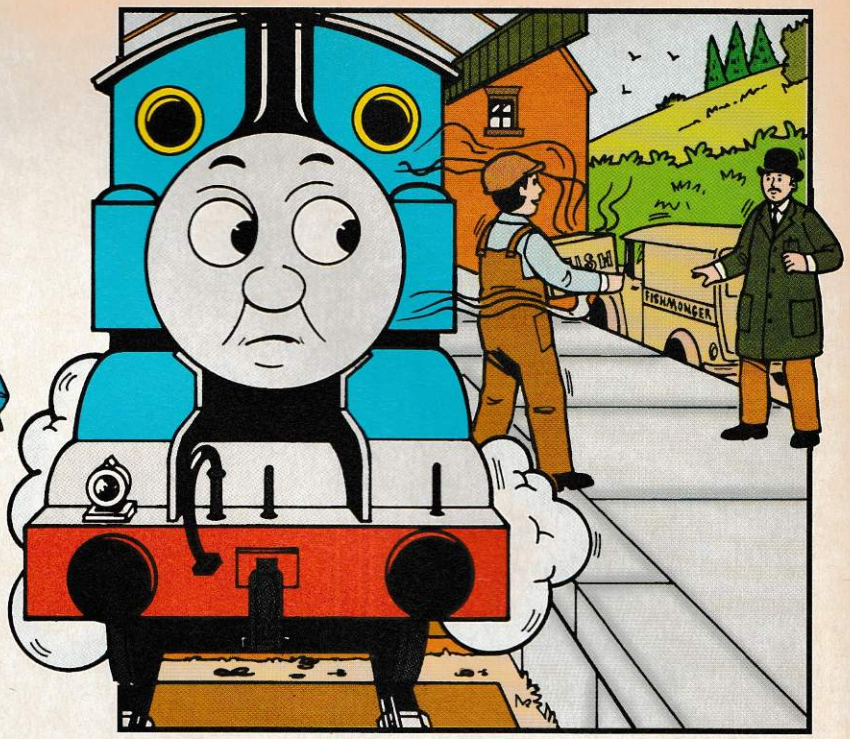


1. Thomas usually enjoyed travelling on the seaside line. But, today, he was in a bad mood. He had been sent to the fish market. "I'll stink of old haddock!" he grumbled.

2. On the way, Thomas passed some workmen putting up a new building, near the pier. "It's to be a sea centre where visitors can watch lots of fish swimming about," called his driver.

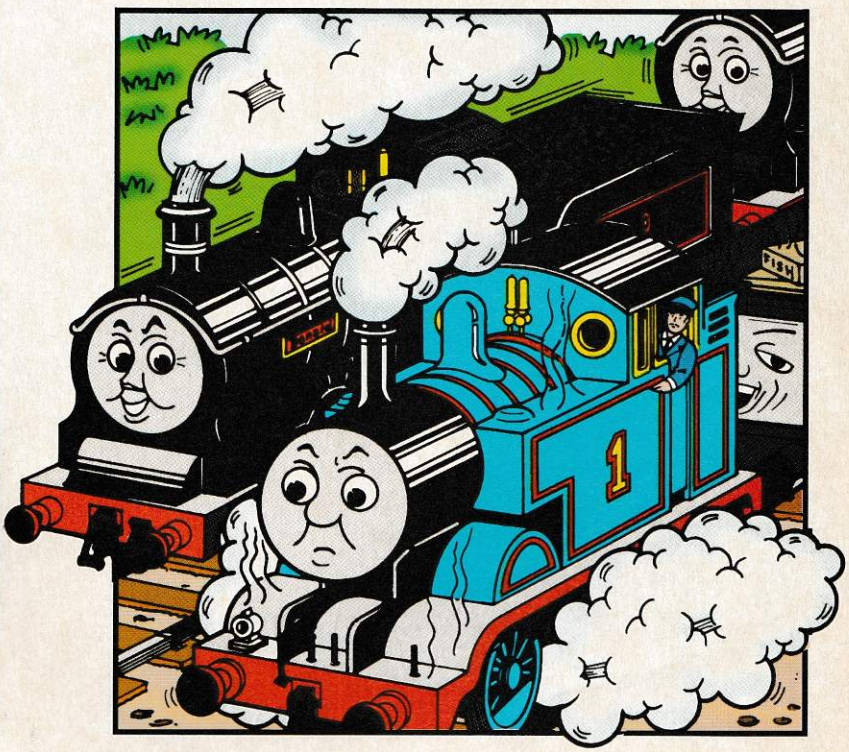


3. Soon, young Thomas rolled into a siding by the fish market. Then his trucks were filled with big boxes of freshly caught fish. Before long, he set off to deliver them all.

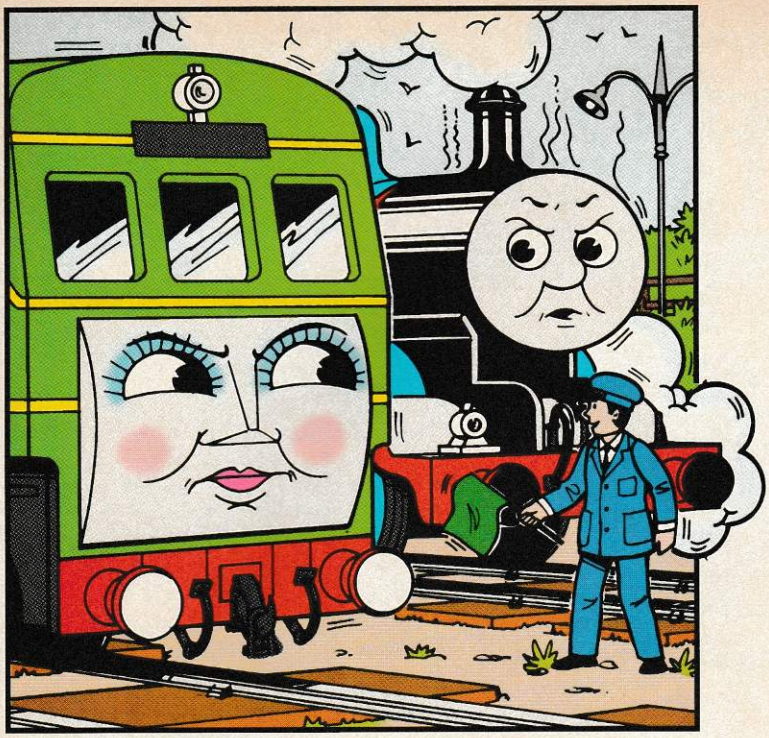


4. He had to take the fish to lots of different stations where his load was collected by people from hotels, restaurants and shops. The smell of fish drifted all over poor Thomas!

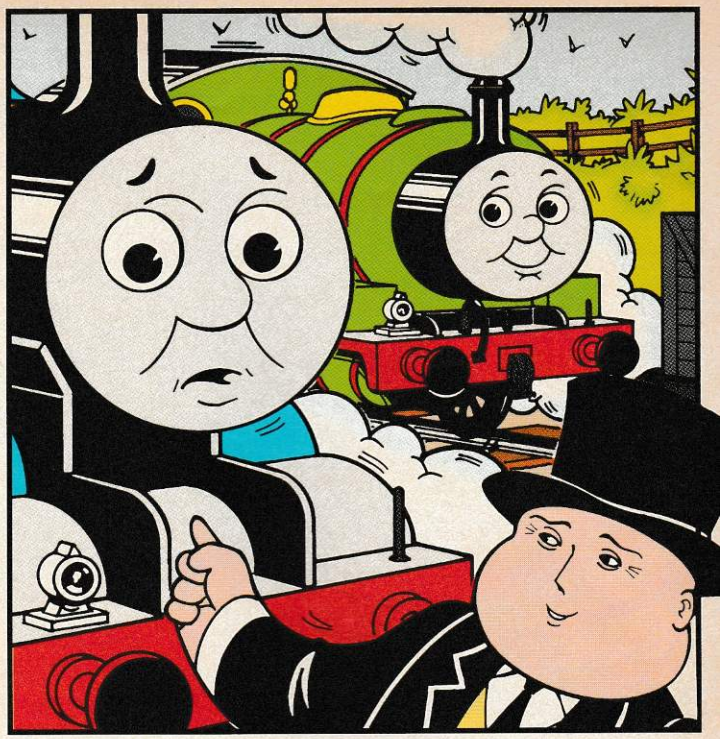
5. "I'll need a good hose down," he hissed. Later, Thomas met Percy. "Hello, fishface, I mean Thomas," Percy called, cheekily. "I can't help smelling fishy!" fumed Thomas.



6, Thomas went past Donald and Douglas. The Scottish twins were pulling a long goods train. "Och! Can't ye go faster, Donald?" cried Douglas. "There's an awful pong!"

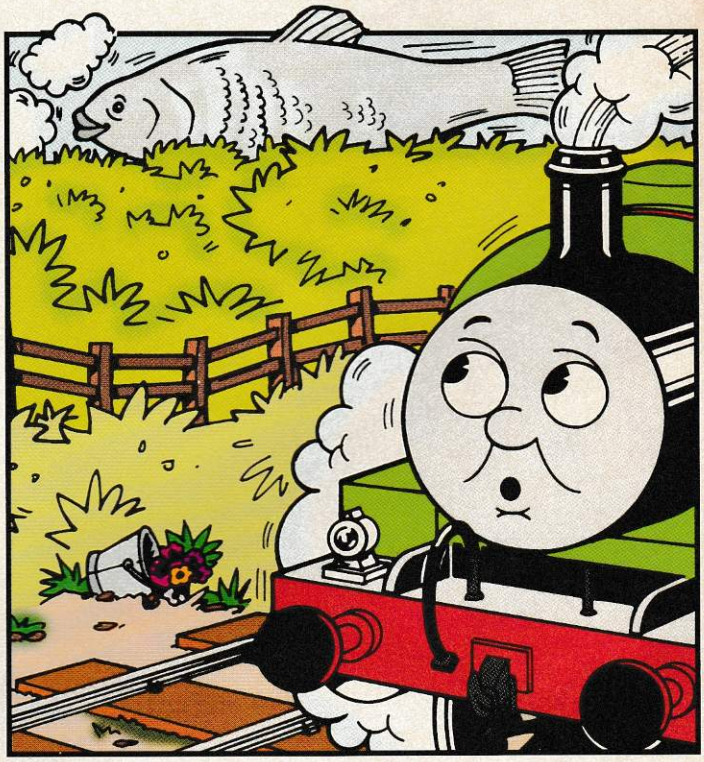


7. When Thomas returned to the Main Station Yard, Daisy wrinkled up her nose at him. "You're smoky and fishy!" she fussed. All that week, Thomas had to carry the fish.



8. He had to put up with lots more teasing, as well. "You'll turn into a fish!" joked Percy. "Just one more fish load to deliver, Thomas," the Fat Controller told him, at last.

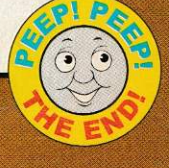
9. Thomas was surprised when he was coupled to a flat truck and taken on his branch line. He was startled to see a very special load waiting for him at a factory siding.



10. Later, Percy was pulling some trucks past a junction. He couldn't believe his eyes. An enormous fish, partly hidden behind a row of trees, was moving along Thomas' line.

11. "Fuming funnels!" gasped Percy. "Thomas has turned into a fish!" Percy hurried back to the Main Station Yard to tell the other engines. No one believed him! Suddenly, they heard a whistle. "Peep! Peeeep!" All the engines spotted the huge fish approaching. "What did I tell you!" cried Percy. Everyone was very relieved to see the fish was on Thomas' flat truck.

12. "It's only a model, made out of plastic!" the Fat Controller soon explained. Thomas proudly took it to the sea centre. It was fixed to the roof, ready for the Mayor to open the new attraction. "At least that fish didn't smell!" Thomas laughed, that night. "Silly Percy!" laughed the other engines. "We guessed there was something fishy about his story!"

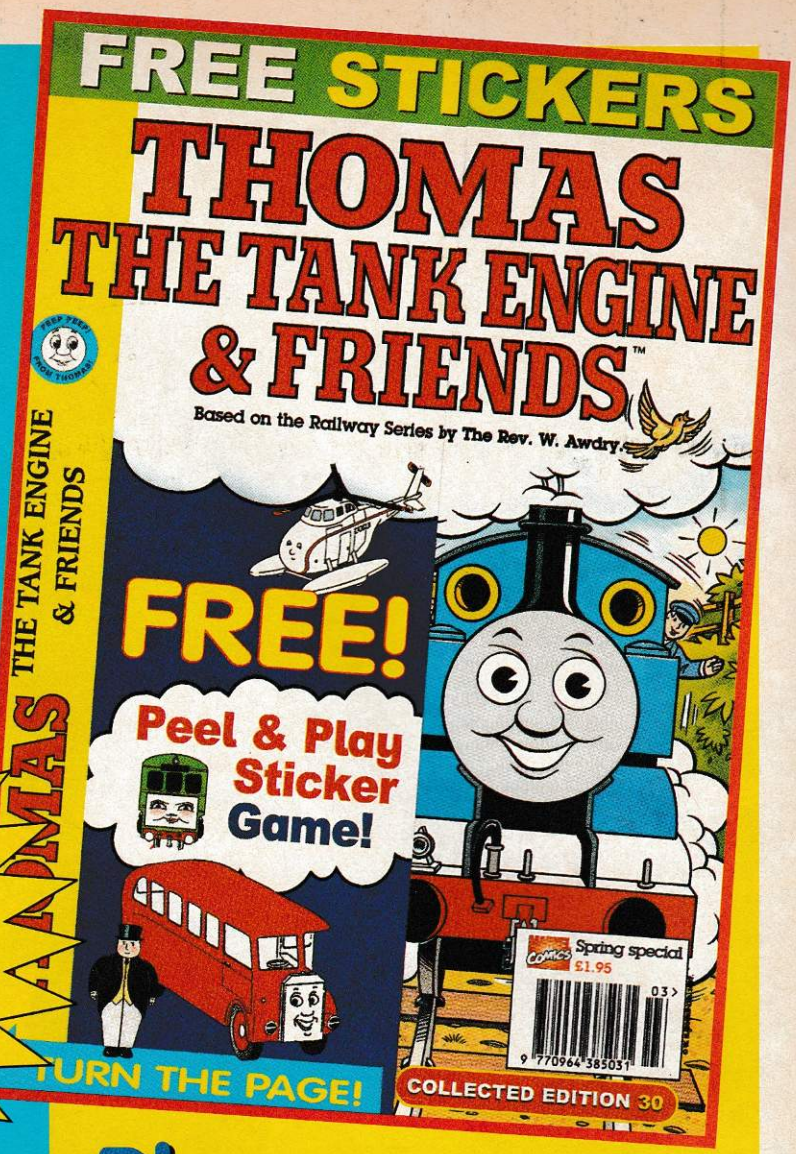


Don't miss . . .

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

Spring Special

FREE
Playboard
Plus
Peel and Play Stickers!



Plus...

- 11 Super stories!
- Pull-out poster!
- Prizes to win!
- Puzzles and games!

Use the stickers of your favourite Thomas characters to create different scenes - over and over again!

Available from all leading newsagents and supermarkets!

On sale NOW!

Thomas and the world's favourite wooden railway.

Thomas the Tank Engine was waiting quietly outside his shed, when he heard some Very Important News.

"Thomas," announced The Fat Controller, "we're going on the BRIO Wooden Railway."

"What's that?" asked Thomas.

"Only the finest wooden railway system in the world – it has track, stations, tunnels, bridges, people, trees and lots more – and it's all made out of solid beechwood."

"What fun!" said Thomas.

"And all your friends are going, including James, Gordon, Annie and Clarabel."

"How exciting," thought Thomas, "I'm bound to make lots of new friends too."

BRIO®
WOODEN RAILWAY SYSTEM

THOMAS
THE TANK ENGINE
& FRIENDS™

The BRIO Wooden Railway System from Sweden now includes Thomas the Tank Engine. From around £3.99 to £74.99. Available from leading Specialist Toy Retailers. Call 01509 231824 (24 hours) or clip the coupon for our full colour brochure and local stockist list.

© Britt Allcroft (Thomas) Limited 1997

Please send me a free BRIO catalogue and a list of local stockists (UK and Ireland only).

Name .....

Age of intended recipient .....

Address .....

..... Post code .....

Existing BRIO toy owner Yes/No T1

CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPT, BRIO LTD, MESSENGER CLOSE, LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICS. LE11 5SP.

The m

Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Train, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

Star Letter

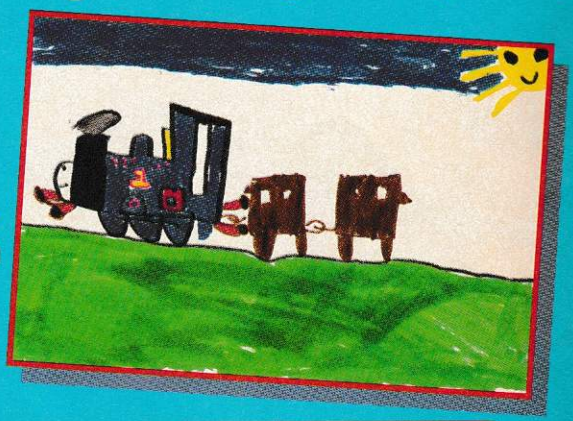
Dear Fat Controller,
Do Thomas and his friends ever have coughs and colds like me?

from Henry Gough, aged 5.

Engines don't get sniffy, sneezy colds like we do, but they can get achy and stiff if they've been in bad weather for too long! A few squirts of some special engine oil and a warm night's rest makes them feel much better!

The sender of any letter that is printed as our STAR LETTER will win a splendid Thomas carry case!

Thomas loves to chuff on sunny days, by Jonathan Gourlay, aged 6.



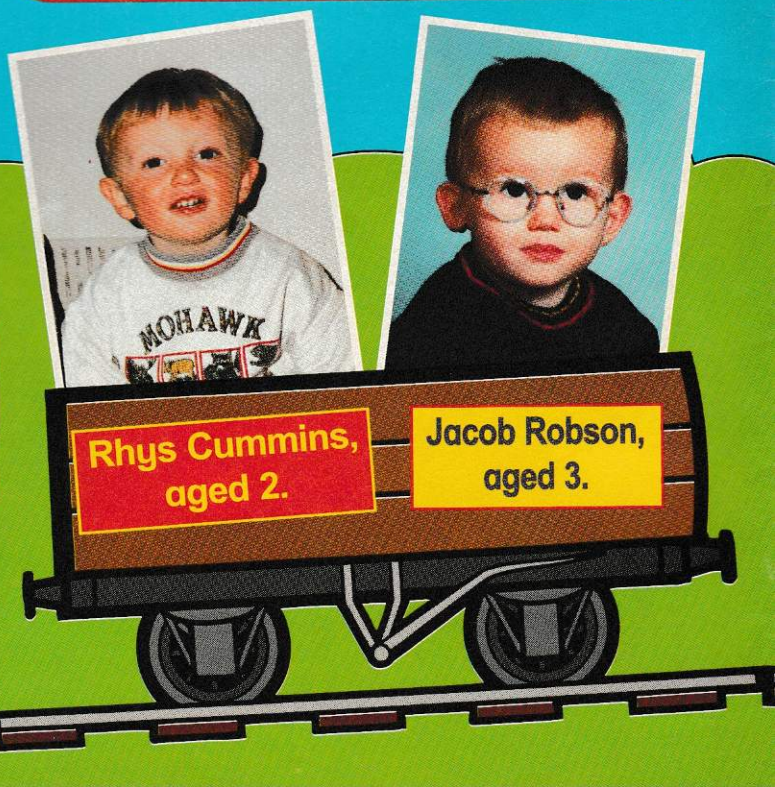
Prize Poem!

Three cheers for William Cowell, aged 4, for writing me this splendid poem!

Duncan you're my favourite,
On the Bluebell Line.
I'd love to have a ride with you,
If you could spare the time.
We'd chuff along and wave to friends,
Like Peter Sam and Rusty.
And then I'd help to clean your paint,
To stop you getting dusty!

Happy Birthday

To: Curtis Wright, aged 4,
Joshua Pallett, aged 4,
David Westcough, aged 3,
Joshua Sanderson, aged 5,
Ashleigh Brydon, aged 4,
Callum Michie, aged 3.



Rhys Cummins, aged 2.

Jacob Robson, aged 3.

ail train!

Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a set of special Thomas Glitter Stickers!

A big thanks to Jamie Johnston, aged 3, for this very happy drawing of me!

Will super quick Henry get there on time? By Bryn Portas, aged 4!

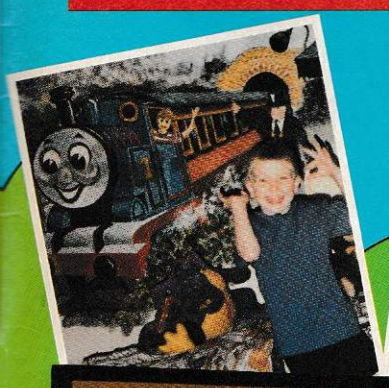
Percy's Jokes

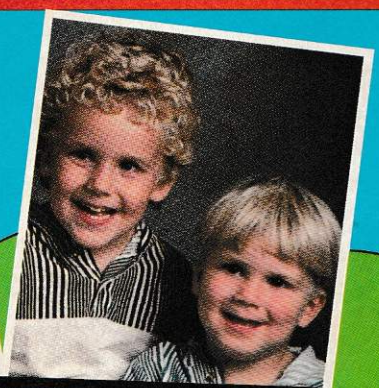
Have you got a favourite joke or funny story? Why not send it to Percy!

What did the baby corn say to the Mummy corn?
Where's Pop Corn?
Oliver Reid, aged 6.

Why do bees have sticky hair?
Because they use honeycombs!
Joanne Hickox, aged 6.

Where do dogs leave their cars?
In a car-bark!
Sam Rodgers, aged 5.





Craig Tallantire, aged 4.

Trevor and Kevin Holdcroft, aged 5 & 3.

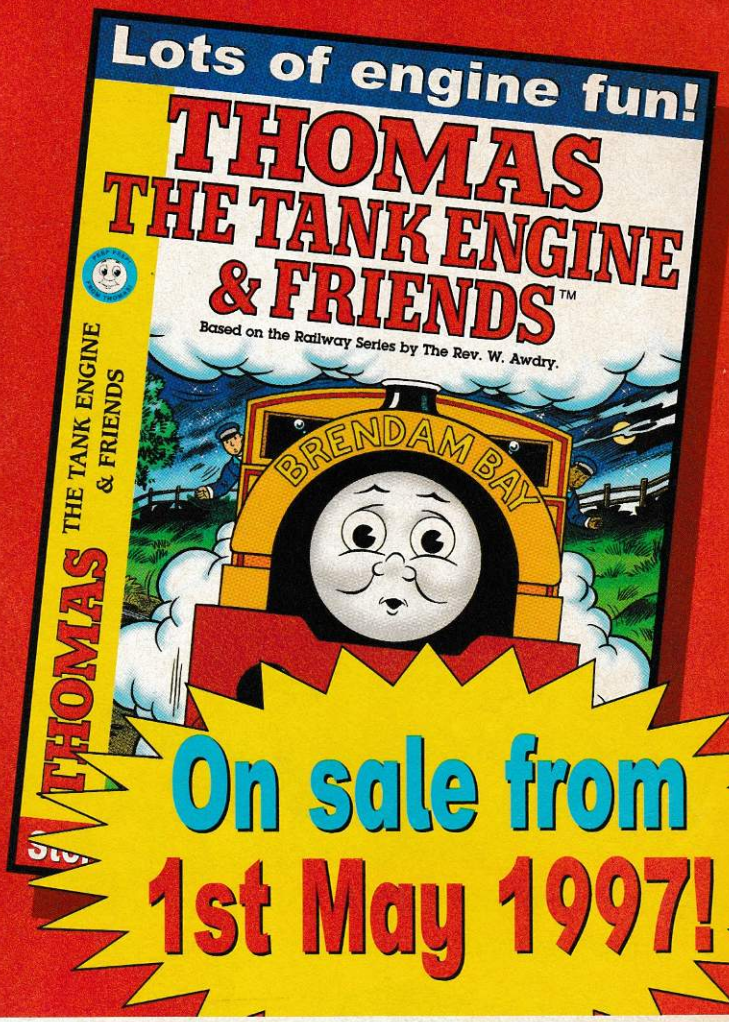
THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Five new stories!

Thomas prizes to win!

Puzzles and colouring!

Issue 250 . . .



On sale from 1st May 1997!

DON'T MISS THE NEXT ISSUE OF THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS!

Dear Newsagent,
Please reserve / deliver all future issues of Thomas The Tank Engine and Friends

Name.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

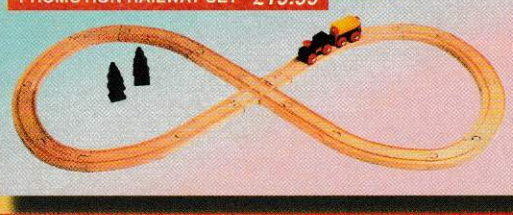
Signature of parent / guardian.....

Thank you

WELCOME ABOARD THOMAS WOODEN RAILWAY

BATTERY-POWERED ENGINE *£10.99*

PROMOTION RAILWAY SET *£19.99*



THOMAS ENGINES				THOMAS RAILWAY SETS	
Thomas	9.99	Stepney	9.99	Thomas Railway Set 1	34.99
Edward	14.99	Annie	8.99	Thomas Railway Set 2	49.99
Henry	14.99	Clarabel	8.99	THOMAS ACCESSORIES	
Gordon	14.99	Troublesome Truck	8.99	4-Figure Pack	4.99
James	14.99	S.C. Ruffey	8.99	Windmill	12.99
Percy	9.99	Terence Tractor	9.99	Thomas's Engine Shed	19.99
Toby	9.99	Bertie Bus	9.99	Henry's Tunnel	24.99

ASL MAIL ORDER CHARACTER MERCHANDISE

ASL Ltd. The Old Vicarage Yarcombe Devon EX14 9BD
United Kingdom. Tel: 01404 861363 Fax: 01404 861591

CREDIT CARD ORDER HOTLINE Tel.01404 861363

Please fill in your Order together with your Name and Address in BLOCK LETTERS.

Product	Qty	Price each	Total
Example: THOMAS	*1*	*9.99*	*9.99*

Postage & Packing (Mainland)	
Orders up to £15.00 in value	1.50
£15.00 and over in value	2.99
Total Order Value £	

Please make cheques payable to 'Adwell Systems Ltd' or Debit my Credit/Switch card, Visa, Access, Mastercard *(delete as necessary).*

Card No.

Issue No.(if shown) Amount: £

Exp. Date Tel.

Name

Address

Post Code

Send orders to: **ASL Ltd. The Old Vicarage, Yarcombe, Devon EX14 9BD. United Kingdom**

Overseas Orders Welcome. Please call or write for a quotation on the carriage.